

# Connecticut Common School Journal.

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All communications intended for the Journal, may be addressed to HENRY BARNARD, 2d., Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, Hartford—post paid.

### TERMS.

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## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE COMMON SCHOOLS THIS WINTER?

Before submitting a few additional suggestions in further reply to this inquiry, we will reiterate the substance of what was said in a former number.

The schools can be improved by rendering the *school-room healthy and comfortable in the proper construction and arrangement of seats and desks, warm, clean, and well ventilated*. Since the former article was written, we have examined several hundred school houses situated in four counties, and it gives us great pleasure to say, that in many the desks are adapted to the seats so as to accommodate children of different sizes; the seats are re-arranged and made of suitable heights, so that the feet of the scholars can in all cases *rest* on the floor, and are in many instances furnished with backs; the escape of the foul air is secured by an opening in the ceiling, or by lowering the upper sash of one or more windows on each side; fuel is in part provided, and a portion of this is dry and well housed; in a few instances a suitable apartment for the younger children has been fitted up, and all the out door arrangements much improved.

But we are compelled to say that in a majority of the school houses which we have visited, nothing has yet been done to repair the ravages of the elements and of mischievous boys during the past summer—nothing to make the schoolroom pleasant, wholesome, and safe, for all parties who will occupy it the ensuing winter. The heart sickens to think of the small, noisy, dirty, close, unventilated, in portions over-heated, and in parts half-heated, apartments, into which forty, fifty and sixty children, with their teacher, will be herded—furnished with seats too high for the sons and daughters of giants, (if giants abounded in these days,) and without backs to lean against, unless it be the narrow edge of the writing desk. It needs no prophet to foretell that coughs, consumptions and deformity will do more or less of their cruel work upon the inmates of such rooms, through the apathy and sinful

negligence of parents and district committees. It is worse than *wasting* the public money, to expend it for instruction in such schoolrooms. The man who taught "the learned pig," versed as he undoubtedly was in "pig learning," and the best ways of teaching pigs, could make but little progress if compelled to instruct a *drove* of pigs in such miserable places as the innocent children—the future men and women of the state—are to be confined in, in a few instances at least, during the coming winter. It is impossible to speak with calmness on such instances of criminal negligence or narrow-minded avarice. There is one other topic, which cannot be dwelt upon here; but it is so intimately connected with the manners, the morals and the health of children, and is so universally neglected, that we cannot pass it by entirely. How can fathers and mothers expect their children to grow up with refined and chaste feelings—with pure thoughts and modest manners—with such utter absence, in a majority of cases, of all proper out-buildings and accommodations as their district school house exhibits? And when they are provided, how often are they defiled by indecent, profane and libidinous images and expressions, contaminating the heart by their familiar and constant presence, and finally deadening all moral sensibility. How long will a virtuous community slumber over this subject? When will these fountains of bitterness and corruption—for such both the absence and the presence of such accommodations are—be staid?

The common schools can be improved by *establishing a gradation of schools*, and thereby securing a better classification of the scholars, more appropriate methods of instruction and government, a smaller number of children to each teacher, and a less distracting and ruinous variety of studies in the same school. We have reiterated the substance of our remarks on this head, simply to add that many districts of the State have already decided to adopt this course. In some it is effected by employing an assistant teacher in the same or an adjacent room; in others by establishing a high school for the older children of the society; and in a few we have reason to believe a Union School, for two or three adjacent districts, will be set up. By this course, that variety of ages and studies now crowded into the winter schools will be avoided, and the teacher will be relieved from that multiplicity of objects, pressing upon his attention and care, to the almost utter annihilation of his usefulness. The younger children of the district will receive suitable attention and instruction, and be prepared for greater progress in the coming summer school. But we must pass to some other suggestions.

The common schools can be improved by the more extensive employment of *female teachers during the winter season*. The best interests of the children demand, during all their early school life, that the more kind, parental, humanizing influence of woman should surround them like an atmosphere. Their opening and inquiring natures turn more readily to her gentle teachings and answering sympathies. They will be less likely to acquire coarse and vulgar habits, for to the honor of the female teachers it must be said, that they are less addicted to such habits. We do not advise that female teachers should be more extensively employed to take the *sole charge* of the winter schools as they are, with all the variety of ages,

studies and books now crowded into them. But few females have got the physical strength to conduct such schools in such badly ventilated school houses as are generally provided. We propose that by some such arrangement as was suggested above, or even in the capacity of monitors, that they should be employed to take charge of the *younger* children, both in the winter and in the summer season. We have not time to develop this subject fully here. We shall recur to it again, for we are satisfied that with the means which the public are likely to devote to the support of common schools, and even with all the means we could ask for, our common schools will not be made such nurseries of intelligent, upright and refined men and women as they can become, until we employ to better advantage than we now do, a larger number of female teachers, of the right character and qualifications.

The common schools can be improved by *continuing them for a longer time this winter than before*. In many districts the school is not continued beyond twelve weeks. Just as the school has got thoroughly under way, the teacher and scholars have become mutually acquainted with each other, and habits of study and school attendance are secured, then the winter school closes; a long vacation intervenes; and the summer school opens with the younger children, while the older boys in too many instances have no other school advantages for the year. We will not enlarge on this topic. It will not cost a district more than sixteen dollars on an average, to continue the school another month; and less than forty dollars to continue it for two months beyond the time it was kept last winter; and by so doing they will secure the services of the teacher, who, if he was worth employing in the first place, will be of increased service to the children by his enlarged experience, and by their having become accustomed to his methods of instruction and government. To do all this, and much more even, would not require half the self denial, nor half the expenditure of money, that our fathers made cheerfully in the midst of peril and comparative poverty, to establish and maintain their schools fifty years ago.

The schools can be improved this winter by employing *better qualified teachers than before*. To do this it will not be necessary, in every instance, to employ new teachers. If the teacher who taught last winter gave good satisfaction, and especially if he has been engaged during the past summer, he is now better qualified than he was last winter, and he should be secured, even at the advance on his former wages. But if a better can be obtained, by all means let such be employed; for this is the most effectual way to improve the quality, and increase the quantity, of sound moral and intellectual instruction in our common schools. By better qualifications, we do not mean that the teacher should be able simply to pass a better examination in "reading, writing and arithmetic, and the rudiments at least of grammar, geography, and history." Every teacher should know all this and much more. Streams will not flow higher, and indeed not quite so high as their fountains; and scholars are not likely to go beyond their teacher, at least if they depend on him for guidance and instruction. By better qualifications, or by suitable qualifications, we mean that the teacher shall not only give evidence of his possessing the requisite attainment in the studies to be pursued, but he should give proof of his ability to *communicate* what he knows, and of his *fondness* for the employment. His moral character should be placed beyond question, and his capacity to govern a school should be most thoroughly tested. In the words of Mr. Mann, "This is to be done, and it can be done, only by questioning them as to their views in respect to the

proper modes and means of governing children,—in what manner obedience is to be secured;—whether fear or affection, whether emulation, which nourishes pride and envy, or a sense of duty and the approval of conscience, is to take precedence in the motives to be appealed to. It enters essentially into the art of governing a school, to understand in what manner children can be pleasantly and usefully occupied; how frequently alternations should occur between the exercise of the body and that of the mind, between the exertions of the intellect and the pleasurable excitement of the feelings. Again, it enters essentially into the art of governing a school, to determine with correctness, whether a code of rules should be laid down beforehand, and specific penalties attached to their violation, or whether the children should be allowed, as far as possible, in the first instance to act out their dispositions, so that the teacher may discover what is right and cultivate it, what is wrong and extirpate it, what exists in too great or too small a degree, and repress the one and foster the growth of the other. Especially, let the teachers be questioned as to what works they have read on the subject of education, what views of their authors they approve, and what they would modify or discard. How is it possible, that a person who has not both read and thought much upon the subject of education, can bring to this most difficult of all earthly tasks that variety of expedients for which there will be such ever-recurring occasions in a school, and that enlightened judgment, which is to preside over the discharge of all its manifold duties?"

The common schools can be vastly improved by a more just appreciation and a more faithful discharge of their several duties on the part of school committees. There are more than *five thousand* persons at this hour entrusted with the administration of the School Law—more than enough, if they would act with the same intelligence and zeal with which they engage in their individual pursuits, or discharge the duties of selectmen, or justices of the peace, or military officers, to infuse life and activity into every department of the school system. But how few of this number have made themselves familiar with the requisition of the law? How many regard the office as a burden, to be endured until the next school meeting, which they will be pretty sure to attend for once, if for no other purpose than to see that a neighbor has the appointment for the following year? How many discharge the duties with a view to secure the public money to their several school societies and districts, rather than to educate the rising generation, their own children and the children of their neighbors, to become jurors, witnesses, electors, magistrates, legislators—for all the relations in which human beings must, in a country like ours, stand towards each other and the community in which they may live? How many do not even enter upon the duties of their offices at all?

It is time that those who are appointed to administer the law in its beneficence—in its aims to elevate, bless, and purify society—should regard themselves, and be regarded by the community, as clothed with an infinitely higher trust than those whose office it is (and we would say nothing to depreciate its just rank) "to try cases of assault and battery, to sentence the vagabond, or suppress street brawls, &c." All these things must be done; but a school system, wisely organized and faithfully and intelligently administered, will do away in a great measure with the occasion for such a numerous army of officers "to keep the peace."

But to come to particulars: *the District Committee* can do much to improve the common schools, and make them more widely useful to the districts and the State.



He can make an effort to bring all the children of the district, of a suitable age, *into the school*, as well as to get their names on the enumeration list, and thus enable them, as well as the district, to get the benefit of the State's provision for their education.

He can employ *one or more* suitable teachers for the school. The duty of selection is left with him. He should act early. The law fixed the appointment of the committee in August, to enable him to make an early selection. Before a contract is made with the teacher, he must see that the teacher has a *certificate of qualification*, signed by the proper authority. If he allows the teacher to enter the school without such a pass, the law of the State is violated, and the teacher cannot receive his wages without another and manifest violation of law.

He can provide *suitable school rooms*. To be *suitable*, there must be room enough, and be supplied with all appropriate fixtures and accommodations necessary for the health, comfort and progress, of all parties occupying it. All necessary repairs should from time to time be made. The expense for providing such suitable rooms must fall on the district, and the district cannot escape from it, if the committee has been duly appointed.

He can visit the school, not only *twice* during the winter, as is now required by law, but *oftener*. Frequent visitation on the part of parents and committees, gives impulse and vigor to the exertions both of scholar and teacher. It is the only way to ascertain the faithfulness of the one, and the progress of the other.

He can *sustain the just authority of the teacher*. He can suspend such scholars as shall be found guilty of incorrigibly bad conduct, and in various ways promote a proper respect for the teacher on the part of the pupils. "No word of complaint, or expression of disapprobation should ever fall upon his ear in presence of the children; in their eye he should be quite as important as the committee. The moment he ceases to be so, his power is in a great measure gone over the children." This is an important principle for parents to remember and act upon. If complaint is to be made, let it be made away from the presence of the scholars.

He must furnish the teacher with a book or register which he is required to keep, and unless it is furnished, the teacher cannot draw but a portion of his wages. This register is necessary as a basis to assess the extra expense for keeping the school, and as the fountain of accurate information to parents, the district, the society, and the legislature.

He can give all proper information and assistance to the school committee and visitors of the society. He can notify school visitors when the school will begin and when it will close. He can give all required information as to the condition of the school, and above all he can with all faithfulness make out certificates required by law, that all public monies received by the district "have been faithfully applied and expended in paying the wages of teachers, and for *no other purpose whatever*," that is, that it has not by any device been expended for the board of the teacher, the supply of fuel, or the repairs of the school house. Such cases, when ascertained, will be reported to the Legislature.

#### CO-OPERATION OF PARENTS IN IMPROVING COMMON SCHOOLS.—CONTINUED.

One of the first things which the parents of the children who attend a school, should do, is to become *personally acquainted* with the teacher. He may be a stranger in the place, and any early attentions shewn him in the way of civility and kind-

ness, will be peculiarly acceptable. They will leave an impression on his mind of the interest felt in him and his occupation, which will be productive of the happiest results. Is he not fairly entitled to such attentions, seeing he is the individual to whom is to be entrusted so important a charge as that of exercising an influence next to that of the parent in the education of his children?

Suppose a farmer, a mechanic, or a merchant, were about to consign a considerable department of his business to the management of a young man with whom he had none, or a very partial acquaintance, would he not be prompt to make this acquaintance more intimate? Would he not wish to secure his confidence and good-will, and enjoy the means, too, of having a salutary influence over him, by showing him those civilities in the way of social intercourse, which are so grateful to the feelings of such as are just coming forward in the business of life.

Are dollars and cents of higher value than the minds and hearts of the rising generation? What must the teacher think of the estimate placed on his occupation, and of the responsibilities connected with it, who finds himself neglected by the very parents of the youth who are placed under his care? Is not such neglect one of the most effectual means of leading him to a want of interest in his employment, and to remissness in the discharge of his duties?

But let him be treated with that attention which his situation truly deserves; let him be invited to the homes of his scholars, and find there a cordial welcome and occasion of improvement and innocent enjoyment, and the happy results can hardly be appreciated. Make the experiment. Let the parent or guardian of youth, whose eye may meet these lines, set about the immediate performance of this duty, and see if the writer is mistaken in his views. Call in a friendly way on the teacher of the school which your children attend. Ask him, (or the young lady, as the case may be) to visit you at some suitable time. Invite a few friends to meet him. Do all in your power to make the visit a pleasant and profitable one. Interest your visitors in the teacher. Have your children present in their best attire, and with their happiest faces. Let them witness the cordiality and respect with which you treat him whom you wish them also to love and obey. Introduce topics of conversation connected with the improvement of the school. Draw out the views and wishes of the teacher. Ascertain how you can aid him in his work. Give him in a friendly and not dictatorial manner, your suggestions. Encourage him to call again, and make him feel that you, and your family are his friends. Try this, and watch the effect.

T. H. G.

#### EDUCATION A BUSINESS FOR LIFE.

It is very common to hear it said of a person, that he is finishing, or has finished, his education. This is an unfortunate expression, for it is founded on erroneous views, and tends to perpetuate and extend them. Education not only begins earlier than most persons imagine, but it continues much longer. In truth, we are receiving education all our days. Every hour adds to our opportunities for improvement, and ought to leave us better qualified for some of our duties, than it finds us. Our whole life, indeed, can truly be regarded as a state of education for a future and higher state of being.

It is a far more just view of school instruction than that which commonly prevails, to regard it as an introduction to the art of self-education. It ought to be so planned and conducted, as to prepare the young to understand their powers

and duties,—the objects of their creation,—the character of their maker,—the ways and means of promoting the best interests of their fellow beings and themselves, and to feel a desire to exert themselves in doing and learning more and more. All views of the subject less extensive and exalted than this, are inadequate, erroneous, and delusive. They are calculated to mislead, to call out only low aims, feeble, and short-lived exertions, and to terminate with disappointment, chagrin, and a practical ignorance of what education really means.

Certain modern writers of celebrity have done much, we fear, to foster such incorrect and injurious opinions. Extravagant eulogiums have been pronounced on the favorable tendency of the mere rudiments of knowledge. A person, after reading the representations of some European advocates of schools, might be in danger of thinking that a generation taught to read and write, would elevate society almost to the highest grade of happiness and prosperity. Here, as in many other points, we should cautiously guard against an undue respect for foreign opinions. On this, more than on almost any other subject, we are bound to exercise our own judgment, and to rely on our own observations; for we have opportunities for obtaining knowledge which are not afforded in any other country. So low is the intellectual state of the mass of most of the nations of Europe, that the strongest advocates of common schools find great difficulty in producing a general conviction that it is possible to teach all the children even to read and write; or, if possible, that it would not be useful or safe. While arguing in favor of this unpopular object, they say some things which are not to be justified by facts; and against all their crude and limited views, we are bound to be on our guard.

However well a youth may be able to endure a common examination at school, or even at college, unless his mind is in the state so briefly sketched above, he cannot be fit to go into business of any kind,—he cannot be said to have received that instruction which will be indispensable to him. Let every friend of our common schools, therefore, place before his eyes a higher standard than any which he finds adopted around him, and consider himself as having but just commenced his education when he leaves school, instead of having completed it. Let teachers, also, often and distinctly inculcate this important doctrine.

#### EXTRACTS FROM MEANS AND ENDS, by Miss Sedgwick.

**MUST HAVES, AND MAY WANTS.**—Miss Edgeworth, a benefactress to the young and old of the reading world, has somewhere represented one of her young people, (our charming friend, Rosamond, I believe,) as making a division of desirable things into "*must have's*," and "*may want's*." I advise my young friends to keep these terms in their minds, and in their self-education always to consider what is essential, and what merely desirable,—that is, what they *must have*, and what they *may want*.

**SCHOOL EDUCATION.**—We hope the day is not far distant when every young person in the United States will be taught to read, write and spell. Even now almost every native of the Eastern states can read, write, and spell. But how do they read? Few with such understanding of what they read, such distinctness of articulation, and correctness of intonation, as to make their reading a benefit and pleasure to their hearers. We seldom hear good reading from the pulpit, and yet good reading is all but an indispensable accomplishment to a preacher. How precious is a good reader in a family circle! one who can take up a paper or book, and read so impressively as to awaken the attention of the younger members of the family, and so clearly as to make those hear, without a painful effort, whose hearing is dulled. Good reading is an elegant accomplishment, as well as one of the *must have's* of education.

Some lavish, my young friends, a vast deal of time and money to learn to play on the piano, and yet is not good reading, an attain-

ment costing nothing but attention and practice, worth more? I think so, though I would gladly hear the sound of vocal and instrumental music rise from every dwelling in our land.

Good writing, (chirography,) is less rare than good reading, but far from universal. Bear in mind in learning to write, that the two important things to be attained are, to write legibly, and to write rapidly, and these may certainly be acquired by practice and attention. You have only carefully to imitate a good model. Flourishes are in bad taste, difficult to acquire, and we believe discountenanced by good teachers. Neatness is important to a good writer, not only neatness in the hand writing, but in preparing your paper, preserving it from soiling, and in folding and directing a letter or a note.

"I do not know who that note came from," said a lady to me as I was reading one, "but I know it came from a well bred person."

"Why?"

"Because it is neatly written, folded, directed, and sealed, and none but well-bred persons do these things as they should be."

The note was from a young girl, a domestic in a friend's family. The girl had had no extraordinary advantages. She had been taught to write, and she had observed how notes were folded, directed, and sealed by well-bred persons. This little note proved two important things—first, that any one with attention and perseverance may write a good hand; and secondly, that good breeding is not necessarily confined to any condition of life.

We have more than once heard ladies say, with great self-complacency, that none but a lady could fold and direct a letter well. We hope that such invidious distinctions are passing away.

A good hand-writing may enable a woman to get her living, and whatever enlarges the bounds of women's employments, is most desirable. Writing is far better paid than sewing. We have known a widow nearly support herself and two children in the city of New York by copying for lawyers. She wrote a *rapid and legible hand*.

Arithmetic is justly considered a *must have* in education.

We have heard several intelligent men of sound judgment say, that they considered a knowledge of arithmetic the most important knowledge to be obtained from books. This study has been so simplified, and rendered so agreeable by improved books, that I believe, my young friends, it is no longer among your dreaded tasks.

But is arithmetic as thoroughly and practically learned as it should be? are girls qualified to keep their own accounts? to keep the family accounts? Do they understand book-keeping? If women were well accomplished in arithmetic, many avenues to employment would be opened that are now shut against them. Arithmetic has a tendency to strengthen the mind, and to inspire a love of order and accuracy, and thus aids women where they are most defective. If, my young friends, you could now realize, that on your perseverance in this study may depend your power to regulate the expenses of your families—to administer on your husband's estates, or to acquire a livelihood, would you let the present opportunity pass, to verify the old adage, by first feeling the worth of it when you feel the want of it?

An historian tells us, that so late as the eleventh and twelfth century, the nobles of France knew only so much of geography as they learned by travelling from place to place. Now, every little school girl among you, with her books, charts, maps and globes, makes acquaintance with all the known parts of the earth.

As to the other studies pursued at schools, general advice would be useless. You will be governed by your parents and teachers, your individual characters, tastes and opportunities.

As a general rule, it would be absurd for a child who goes to school but three months in a year, to study Latin and rhetoric, and take lessons in drawing, but if you have a constant and keen desire, and a talent for these studies, you should, I think, pursue them,—you will make your own opportunities.

Bear it in mind, that it is more important *how* you study than *what* you study.

**THREE EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL EDUCATION.**—I will give you the examples of three school-girls I have known intimately, and you shall judge which was like to profit most by her school-education.

Julia Willet is the daughter of a rich merchant in one of our large cities. She has been for five years at a celebrated school in that city, and has been the most distinguished scholar in the school. Every week she has won home medals enough to make a Catholic's rosary, for she has had masters for every hour, and done the best task for each master. But for what has she learned the lessons? To get the medals. To be called, not to be, the first in the school. Her parents are ignorant persons; they know nothing of her pursuits. They never talk with her about them. They exclaim with rapturous countenances, "Julia has all the medals again this week! and tell their friends with a triumph they cannot conceal, that "Julia is the first scholar at Madame B's school."

Meanwhile, Julia Willet's mind is no more enriched or improved, than the mill is by the grist it turns out. Those are enriched who work the mill. She does not examine, compare and apply her knowledge. It is like immense quantities of water accumulated in



a reservoir, of no use there, but the same water, if properly distributed and applied, would manifest its life-giving principle in the production of fruits and flowers.

Agnes Crawford is one of a very few privileged girls who compose what is called a family school in the country, conducted by a competent instructress. Agnes is indisposed to the labor of study, and unhappily, being an only child, this indisposition has been cherished by indulgence at home. Never had a child better opportunities of improvement. Health, time, books, and the most judicious and kindest of teachers, and Heaven's gift, good faculties. But unhappily, she is possessed with the idea that school is one long task to be gone through, and then done with forever. At every new study proposed, she has a regular crying fit, and declares "she will write home to mother and know if she has got to learn this." When she gets over the fretting and misery of the beginning of a task, she goes on well, and briskly, for here her natural neglected faculties come to her aid; but alas! the knowledge for which she has no relish, is forgotten as soon as acquired. At the end of the term, she has been seen to throw the last book in her hand through the open window, and half across the garden, exclaiming, "Joy, joy! we have done with books!"

Emma Austen is another girl at the same school, a day-scholar. She is the eldest daughter of a widow in reduced circumstances, who lives about two miles from the village. Mrs. Austen is anxious to have Emma qualified to be an instructress, but has no means to pay for expensive teaching. Agnes' teacher, sympathizing with the widow's anxieties and troubles, (for like the poor woman who excited Scott's compassion, she has been all her life "a struggler,") proposed to take Emma into her school on condition she should keep the school room in order, and perform certain other trifling services. Oh! how faithfully and cheerfully they were performed; for Emma felt that she could not do enough to express her sense of the value of Mrs. ———'s instruction. Every morning Emma rose with the dawn, in order to lighten her mother's household labors before leaving her for the day. Then with her luncheon basket in one hand, and her books in the other, she trudged her two miles to school, her cheek blooming, and her eye sparkling with health and the consciousness of duty well done. She was always ready at the opening of the school, to enter on her studies, her attention fixed, and her faculties awake; and with such a cheering sense of the power and the happiness resulting from the acquisition of knowledge, that what was a heavy task to some of her school fellows, seemed but a spur to her. Her language was always "Oh! thank you, Mrs. ——— for letting me begin this study; I have longed to,"—and, "If you think I can study French without interfering with my other studies, I shall be so glad; for mother and I both want that I should make the most of my school-privileges."

In the evening, at home, Emma communicated to a young brother and sister so many of her acquisitions as were adapted to them. Her long walk over the hills prevented any mischievous effects from this application. Her mind and body were both in a most healthy state, and both growing to their full possible stature.

Emma Austen was six months in this school. If, at the end of the school education of these three girls, you had asked Julia Willet to give you some account of the kings of England, she would have told you their names from the Heptarchy down to George the 4th—their ages, the periods of their accession to the throne, and their deaths. Agnes Crawford would have told you she had learned all this, but she had forgotten it; and she would probably add, she "did not see what good it would do any body to know it!"

Emma, though she might possibly have forgotten here and there one of the do-nothing kings, have dropped a link in the chain, yet could tell you what king did most to crush the liberties of the people, and who most to promote them—who extended farthest the geographical limits of his dominions, and who made the most generous efforts for the happiness of his subjects—in whose reign the arts most flourished, and in whose they were most depressed; and, in short, she would prove that her mind had worked, and was enriched by its labor.

Now it is manifest that Emma Austen's external helps were inferior to Julia Willet's, or Agnes Crawford's. Her faculties, if superior to Julia's, certainly were not to Agnes'. Was it not, then, the temper she brought to her studies, the moral force she put upon them, that gave her her great advantage over her school-mates?

It is the world *within*—the world which you can modify and regulate, that makes your character and destiny—and not the impassive world *without*.

I wish, my young friends, you would think over this matter—that you would for yourselves observe your acquaintance, note their opportunities and their pursuits, and the dispositions they have carried to those pursuits, and I think you would come to my conclusion—that the self educating girl has her improvement, even in school-learning, much more in her own hands than she had supposed—that it will be in vain that the light of knowledge is shining from east to

west—and every wind from heaven blowing teachers to her service, unless the windows of her mind are thrown open to that light, and her heart given to the teaching of the teachers.

We have applied to Dr. Alcott, to furnish a series of articles for the Journal, in his usual lucid and interesting style, which should be adapted to the older scholars in our schools. We commence their publication with this number.

## THE HOUSE I LIVE IN.

By Dr. Wm. A. Alcott.

### No. 1. HOW THE HOUSE IS BUILT.

While we are young, the body is constantly growing. But *how* does it grow? Not surely, like the stone or rock, by accretion; that is, by layers of earth or something else adhering to the sides of it, and gradually becoming hard and solid, like the rock itself. Not like the tree, exactly; by drawing juices from the earth, and imbibing or sucking up particles of nutriment from those juices.

But I will endeavor to tell you, as plainly as I can, how the human body grows. Some of the finer or better particles contained in the blood, are taken out of that fluid, as it passes along by the various parts of the body, and employed in building and increasing the size of those various parts. This power of selecting something from the blood, and applying it to build up the various parts of the body, seems to be possessed by every part of the whole system.

Let us take, for an example, the thumb. Now, there are hundreds of arteries, greater or less, scattered through all parts of even this small member of the human frame; and all these parts have the power of taking out and using just such parts of the blood as suit their own purpose. Thus, some have the power of taking out such particles as will make bone; others, such as will make flesh; others, such as will make hair and nails, and so on. The same is true of every part and organ of the body, as well as the thumb. Even the heart itself, that sends out the blood, to furnish materials for building up the frame of the *house I live in*, must itself be built up by the blood which is carried through it in numerous small vessels.

But not only is the system built up while we are growing—that is, formed—but it requires a great deal of repairing. The motions of the joints, of the lungs, of the tendons or cords, and even of the blood itself in the heart, arteries and veins, is perpetually wearing out all the parts of the system, whether we are young or old. They have a tendency, I mean, to wear them out, and would wear them out, if nothing were done to prevent it. Some wear faster and some slower, but all have their "wear and tear." Now every old particle, that is worn off from any of the parts, requires to be replaced with a new one. So that you see there is a great deal of *mending* as well as *making* to be performed. And now all the materials for both making and mending must be procured from the blood.

Here you will be disposed to ask—at least, some of you may—what becomes of the old waste particles, in adult persons who have done growing; whether they stay in the vessels, and keep going round and round, or whether they contrive, in some way, to get out of them. The answer to this question is easy. They are *sifted out*, as it were; that is, they are carried out by means of the kidneys and bladder, which seem made for this purpose, and also, by means of a thousand, tens of thousands rather, little openings in the skin, in the form of what is called *perspiration*, which, when abundant, we call *sweat*.

A more important question arises here. How is the blood itself recruited? If the old or waste particles of the body and blood are carried off, and if the finer parts of the blood are constantly being taken up, to *make or mend* the parts through which it passes, there should be some way of obtaining a new supply of fine particles, or the finer parts would very soon be all exhausted. Whence comes this supply? The appropriate reply to this question, will involve at once a description of the process of digestion.

The supply of new particles, is furnished by means of food. First, we take food into our mouths; next, we chew it, and mix it with the saliva; then, we swallow it; then, the stomach, which receives it, by means of a liquor called the gastric juice, forms it into chyme, and from this chyme, after it is carried into the small intestines beyond the stomach, a milky or pearl colored fluid is formed, called chyle. The chyle thus formed, is first found in the beginnings or mouths of

small vessels, called lacteals, which conduct it away from the intestines, and finally unite, as small streams unite to form rivers, and pour their contents into a single large vessel or pipe, that winds its way along, and at last empties itself into one of the large veins. Mingled now with the blood, it is carried immediately to the right side of the heart, and thence into the lungs, where a change is supposed to take place, which consists partly in turning the whitish or pearl-colored chyle, into the liquid which we call blood. Lastly, this chyle, thus formed into blood, goes along with the rest of the mass of the blood just purified, to the left side of the heart, whence it is distributed to all parts of the system.

This whole process of furnishing or adding new particles to the blood, in the manner I have described, is called the digestive process, or digestion. Sometimes, however, when we talk of digestion, and even when we speak of it in books, we only mean, the process of changing our food in the stomach, or of making it into chyme. But I shall use the term in its larger sense, as meaning all which has been mentioned; and shall now proceed to give you a more particular account of this wonderful process.

Digestion, in its largest sense, then, includes mastication, salivation, chymification, chylicification, and sanguification; the agents immediately concerned in accomplishing these five processes, are, the mouth in general, the teeth, the salivary glands, the stomach, the gastric juice, the bile, the pancreatic juice, the lacteals, the veins, the lungs, and the air.

1. Of MASTICATION. Mastication, or chewing, is a more important process than has usually been supposed. If our food is not well masticated, the chyme made in the stomach will not be so good as it otherwise might be; and if the chyme is of an inferior quality, the chyle must be so too; and so also the blood. And lastly, if there is bad blood, it must soon produce disease.

But if the mastication of our food is so important a matter, how comes it to pass, you will ask, that infants who have no teeth get along as well as they do? And why is it, that very old people, who lose their teeth, do not suffer in their health from this cause? The reply is, the author of nature seems to have made special provision in the case of infants, by giving them a kind of food which is, to all intents and purposes, already masticated; and as for old people, there is every reason for believing that they are sometimes sufferers from imperfect mastication, though not so often as you may at first suppose, for their gums become hard by use, and are almost as good as teeth.

While we are masticating our food, another process is going on, usually called *insalivation*. This consists in the formation and pouring forth into the mouth of a fluid called saliva. It is formed in certain small, soft, flattish bodies in the cheeks, near the ears, and in certain similar parts under the tongue. These are called glands; and those in the cheeks are the *salivary glands*. The fluid they furnish, the saliva or spittle, is, as you know, a bland, limpid fluid, which, during the process of mastication, becomes mixed with our food.

Both of these processes, mastication and insalivation, are exceedingly important, in order to have the work of digestion go on well; and in order too, that the blood may perform well its office. For proof that this is so, I might refer you to the fact, that those persons who only crush their food a little, and then, with the aid of a good deal of butter, or gravy, or some other moisture, bolt it down as soon as possible, are very liable to have a foul stomach, and prematurely decayed teeth. Nor is this all. The teeth themselves, when they are but little employed, do not last as well as when they are used moderately, as we see in the case of those persons who chew their food wholly on one side of the mouth; for while the teeth which are used remain sound, those which are not used at all, decay, or fall out.

When the work of mastication and insalivation is completed the finely broken and properly moistened mass is swallowed, or passed into the stomach. Even this process has a name in books, which is *deglutition*. The truth is, it consists in something more than merely conveying the food, by means of the mouth and tongue to the top of the throat, as to the top of a bottle, and letting it fall in; for we can swallow when our bodies are in a horizontal position, or even when our heads are downwards. In fact, the act of swallowing is quite a compli-

cated and curious process; but it would take too long to explain everything as we pass.

CHYMIFICATION. The food having entered the stomach, it is now to be converted into chyme. This, the work of chymification, is, as I have already told you, a very important process, so much so as to have obtained, in itself, the name of digestion. But, before you can understand it, I must describe to you the stomach.

It is situated a little to the left of the centre of the body, and is in shape, somewhat oval. It is usually said to hold, in an adult, about a quart, or three pints. Though I have told you, it is oval, this expression does not very well describe its shape. Indeed, it is very difficult to describe it at all, without showing you the organ itself. The books which treat on the subject say it resembles a Scotch bagpipe; but I suppose most of you have never seen this instrument of music, so that such a comparison will not be very serviceable. It is a soft bag, lined, on its inside, with a membrane or skin, almost exactly like that which lines the mouth, only rather more fleshy. It lies a little crosswise of the body, with its largest end toward the left side. The esophagus, or food pipe, through which we swallow, enters at this extremity. At the right or smaller extremity, is also an opening, not unlike the mouth of a money purse, called the pylorus, which is a Greek word meaning door-keeper. It is called by this name, for reasons which will appear shortly.

I have said that this soft bag, called the stomach, will hold about a quart, or three pints. Now the size varies in people exceedingly. In those who have been accustomed from early childhood to gluttony, it is much larger than in those who have been more temperate. I have known some boys who made it their daily practice, if their parents did not prevent it, to eat as long as they could hold food; and as the parents could not be always on the watch, they would eat between their meals, of fruit, if nothing else. Now, these boys, if they continue the habit of gormandizing thus till they came to be men, could not fail to have large stomachs. Just as is the case with certain pet lambs or pigs, which are sometimes seen. They are illshapen, just because they have very large stomachs, and their stomachs are large, just because they have been improperly or unreasonably fed.

You must not suppose, that because I say the stomach will hold a quart or three pints, it is therefore a hollow and open space, whenever it has nothing in it. Very far otherwise.—When it is empty, the sides come together, just like the sides of any common bag, when it is empty. And in order to have it perform its work properly, it ought to be often empty. We ought not to eat between meals. This organ needs rest, as much as our arms or our legs.

But I am now to tell you something about the formation of chyme. After we have eaten a meal, if the mass in the stomach is not too moist, the work of changing it begins immediately. If there is too much liquid in it, that must in the first place be taken away. For this purpose, there are numerous little vessels, whose mouths open on the inside of the stomach, which take it up and carry it off into the other parts of the body—after which, but not before, the formation of chyme goes on. In order to this, however, the gastric juice becomes necessary, just as the saliva is necessary in mastication. This juice seems to ooze out, in little drops, on the inside of the stomach, like the drops of perspiration, which sometimes stand out on a person's forehead, in a very hot day, only much more numerous. So great, in fact, is the quantity of moisture thus formed, that it seems, in a very little time, to soak thoroughly all the outside portion of the contents of the stomach, and form it into that grayish mass which we call chyme. During this process of chymification, the stomach is in constant motion, never standing still, so that the outside of its contents is not only formed into chyme, but also the inside. The outside of the mass, however, becomes changed faster than the inside, and finds its way along by means of the motion of the stomach, to the right extremity of the latter, when the pylorus, or purse-like passage, suffers it to pass, in small quantities at a time, into the intestine beyond. This last, for a foot or so beyond the stomach, is larger than it is farther on, though by no means as large as the stomach itself.

A great deal has been said by many writers on physiology, about this pylorus, or door keeper—now it seems to have the



power of choosing between the various substances which approach it—of receiving some substances and rejecting others. Of all which has been said, this is probably true, that it first and most readily allows good and well formed chyme to pass, but it is also true that it will allow badly formed chyme to pass, after it has remained for some time in the stomach, as well as substances which cannot be made into chyme—such as apple seeds, cherry stones, &c.

I have told you that the gastric juice—that liquid which softens the food in the stomach, and is so indispensable in forming it into chyme—appears to ooze from the inside of the stomach. Now the sides of this membranous bag, (the stomach) are full of little blood vessels full of blood; and the gastric juice is made from the blood in these vessels; but how it is made, especially in such quantity and so rapidly as to moisten half a pint or a pint of food in the stomach in a very short time indeed, no one knows. We only know the fact. This taking out particles for the blood, however, to form this substance—as the saliva or the chyme—is called a secretion. It is sometimes done by what are called glands, as is the case of the saliva or the bile, (of which last I shall speak presently) and sometimes by the very parts themselves through which the blood vessels run, without any particular machinery for the purpose, so far as we can discover, as in the case of the gastric juice.

**CHYLIFICATION.** The contents of the stomach, if such as it ought to be, are usually changed into chyme, in from two to four hours. Meanwhile the various portions of it which the pylorus suffers to pass into the duodenum, the first division of the large intestine beyond the stomach, are there still farther soaked and softened and changed, till they become fit to be taken up by what are called lacteals, or milk vessels. You have already been told that what is taken up by these vessels has either a milky or pearl-colored appearance, and is carried into the blood vessels to make new blood. This pearly or milky fluid is the chyle, and is just like blood, except that it is not red, and does not become red till it has passed through the lungs.

The chyme is not all taken up and made into chyle and carried into the circulation. What is taken up in the small intestines, next to the stomach, and made into chyle, passes on into the larger intestines; and finally finds its way out of the body. Not however until it has united with another fluid still, a yellow, bitter liquid, very unlike the gastric juice or the saliva, and called bile. It is made or secreted by the liver, and is conveyed into the intestines through a pipe or tube prepared by the Divine Framer of our bodies for that purpose. A fourth liquid—much more like the saliva than any other fluid—and made by a gland called the pancreas, or, in popular language, *sweet bread*—is also poured into the intestines along with the bile. Connected with the liver is a small bag, or reservoir for bile—known in general by the name of the gall bladder; or as it might more properly be called, the bile bladder. Its use is not fully known; but it is supposed to be intended as a reservoir for the bile, to be used on special occasions or emergencies.

I have spoken of the chyle as being either pearl-colored or milky. When our food is chiefly farinaceous, as bread of various kinds, rice, potatoes, corn, beans, sago, &c., it is more clear and pearl-colored; but when we use much flesh or fish, or soups, or butter, or almost any other more stimulating and at the same time more doubtful food, it becomes less clear and has a more milky appearance. Here a very curious fact may be remembered. This chyle has vitality, or life, like the blood, or the flesh itself; and this vitality or life, adheres to it very strongly, as it does to those substances—so strongly, that if taken out of the body, and preserved in an open vessel, it will be a considerable time before it putrefies. There is, however, and this is the point to which I was about to direct your attention, a great difference in this respect, according to the nature of the substances from which the chyle is made. When made from farinaceous or mealy substances, like those above mentioned, it does not putrefy so soon by several days, as when made from oily or animal food. It is on this ground, more, perhaps, than any other single fact, that a belief has been founded, of the superiority of a farinaceous diet over every other. Man is indeed so constituted by the great Creator, that his system will manufacture chyme and chyle in greater or less degree, from almost every substance, both of

the animal and the vegetable kingdoms, and is, in this respect, omnivorous, or all-devouring. Nevertheless, it is beginning to be believed, by those who have studied this subject most profoundly, and attended to the greatest number of facts in the case, that the best chyme and chyle are made from *milk* and the *farinaceu*.

One thing more must be remembered. People are apt to confound solution or dissolution, with digestion. True it is, that what is digested, must of course have been dissolved; but it is also equally true, that not all which is dissolved is digested. It may be reduced to chyme, or at least mixed with it; but it does not thence follow that it makes good chyle. Instead of being taken up by the lacteals, and by them formed into good chyle, it is probable, that a part, at least, of a great many things we eat, after undergoing solution, (not digestion) passes out of the system, without being of any use to us, unless to stimulate to action the bowels themselves, on the principle of certain cathartic medicines. There is indeed, great reason for believing, that not half of what we ordinarily eat, especially greasy or unmaستicated substances, is ever made into chyle, good or bad. It rather passes off, as indissoluble matter, or as superfluous chyme. Nor is it merely superfluous, that is, harmless. It loads, and burdens, and wears out the system unnecessarily; and it would be far better for our health in the end, if we only ate that which is best for us, and in just sufficient quantity.

**SANGUIFICATION.** But suppose the lacteals, and the great vessel or pipe in which they terminate—the thoracic duct—to be filled with good and perfect chyle; how is it to be made into blood? This is what I regard as the last, and indeed the most important step in the great process of digestion—that process by which our frames are, as I have already said, repaired, or built up; and it is this process to which I have given the name of sanguification.

Of the nature of this process, however, we are, after all, pretty ignorant. We only know that the chyle is carried away from the lacteals, and poured into the veins, mixed with the blood, and then carried along, thus mixed with the blood, through the lungs, from which it comes out, (if the lungs are in a free and healthy state, and receive a full supply of pure air) formed into good and perfect and healthy blood, from which the system, if in a healthy state, can take up fine portions, or particles, to answer all its important purposes. Thus the bones can take up, that is, take out from the blood, just such particles, and no other, as are well fitted to make bone—the flesh, such as are best fitted to make flesh—the hair, nails, &c., such as are best fitted to make hair and nails, and so on.

Drinks, what are commonly called drinks I mean, do not make chyme, chyle, or blood. They only serve to dilute those substances, and if they are in very great abundance, more than is just sufficient for that special purpose, they are *in the way*. This is even the case with water; but it is still more so with all drinks which are stronger than water. But I may possibly tell you more on that point hereafter.

I have now gone through with what I intended to say in regard to the great process of digestion. Respiration is so intimately connected with digestion, forming indeed almost a part of it, that I purpose, in the next number, to give you a brief and plain account of that process.

#### THE DISTRICT SCHOOL AS IT WAS.

BY ONE WHO WENT TO IT.

As some of our readers may not have met with an amusing and instructive little, volume under the above title we will make a few extracts for this and the following number of the Journal. It is written in a playful spirit, and bears internal evidence that its locality belongs to a neighboring state. We hope that this "pleasant picture of some peculiarities which have prevailed," will hasten the tardy steps of improvement.

**THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.**—The Old School-house in District No. 5, stood on the top of a very high hill, on the north side of what was called the county road. The house of Capt. Clark, about ten rods off, was the only human dwelling within a quarter of a mile. The reason why this seminary of letters was perched so high in the air, and so far from the homes of those who resorted to it, was this,

Here was the centre of the district, as near as surveyor's chain could designate. The people east would not permit the building to be carried one rod further west, and those of the opposite quarter were as obstinate on their side. So here it was placed, and this continued to be literally the hill of science to generation after generation of learners for fifty years.

The edifice was set half in Capt. Clark's field, and half in the road. The wood-pile lay in the corner made by the east end and the stone wall. The best roof it ever had over it was the changeable sky, which was a little too leaky to keep the fuel at all times fit for combustion, without a great deal of puffing and smoke. The door step was a broad unhewn rock, brought from the neighboring pasture. It had not a flat and even surface, but was considerably sloping from the door to the road, so that in icy times the scholars in passing out used to snatch from the scant declivity the transitory pleasures of a slide. But look out for a slip-up, ye careless, for many a time have I seen urchin's head where his feet were but a second before. And once the most lofty and perpendicular pedagogue I ever knew, became suddenly horizontalized in his egress.

But we have lingered round this door step long enough. Before we cross it, however, let us just glance at the outer side of the structure. It was never painted by man, but the clouds of many years had stained it with their own dark hue. The nails were starting from their fastness, and fellow clapboards were becoming less closely and warmly intimate. There were six windows, which here and there stopped and distorted the passage of light by fractures, patches, and seams of putty. There were shutters of board, like those of a store, which were of no kind of use excepting to keep the windows from harm in vacations, when they were the least liable to harm. They might have been convenient screens against the summer sun, were it not that their shade was inconvenient darkness. Some of these from loss of buttons were fastened back by poles, which were occasionally thrown down in the heedlessness of play, and not replaced till repeated slams had broken a pane of glass, or the patience of the teacher. To crown this description of externals, I must say a word about the roof. The shingles had been battered apart by a thousand rains. And excepting where the most defective had been exchanged for new ones, they were dingy with the mold and moss of time. The bricks of the chimney-top were losing their cement, and looked as if some high wind might hurl them from their smoky vocation.

We will now go inside. First there is an entry which the district were sometimes provident enough to store with dry pine wood, as an antagonist to the greenness and wetness of the other fuel. A door on the left admits us to the school room. Here is a space about twenty feet long and ten wide, the reading and spelling parade. At the south end of it, at the left as you enter, was one seat and writing bench, making a right angle with the rest of the seats. This was occupied in the winter by two of the oldest males in the school. At the opposite end was the magisterial desk raised upon a platform a foot from the floor. The fire-place was on the right, half way between the door of entrance and another door leading into a dark closet where the girls put their outside garments and their dinner baskets. This also served as a fearful dungeon for the immuring of offenders. Directly opposite the fire-place was an aisle two feet and a half wide, running up an inclined floor to the opposite side of the room. On each side of this were five or six long seats and writing benches for the accommodation of the school at their studies. In front of these, next to the spelling floor, were low, narrow seats for abecedarians, and others near that rank. In general, the older the scholar, the further from the front was his location. The windows behind the back seat were so low that the traveller could generally catch the stealthy glance of curiosity as he passed. Such was the Old School-house at the time I first entered it. Its subsequent condition and many other inconveniences, will be noticed hereafter.

The author thus dismisses the Old School-house in his last chapter. We hope that the children in some of our districts may have a similar cause for rejoicing.

I would have my readers see how the long used and hard used fabric appeared, and how near to dissolution it came before the district could agree to accommodate their children with a new one.

We will now suppose it my last winter at our school. Here we are inside, let us look around a little.

The long writing benches arrest our attention as forcibly as anything in sight. They were originally of substantial plank, an inch and a half thick. And it is well that they were thus massive. No board of ordinary measure would have stood the hackings and hewings, the scrapings and borings which have been inflicted on those sturdy plank. In the first place, the edge next the scholar is notched from end to end, presenting an appearance something like a broken toothed mill-saw. Upon the upper surface there has been carved or pictured with ink, the likenesses of all things in the heavens and

on earth, ever beheld by a country school boy; and sundry guesses at things he never did see. Fifty years has this poor timber been subjected to the knives of idlers, and almost the fourth of fifty I have hacked on them myself; and by this last winter their width was diminished nearly one half. There are, moreover, innumerable writings on the benches and ceilings. On the boy's side were scribbled the names of the Hannahs, the Marys, and the Harriets, towards whom young hearts were beginning to soften in the first gentle meltings of love. One would suppose that a certain Harriet A. was the most distinguished belle the district has ever produced, from the frequency of her name on bench and wall.

The cracked and patched and puttied windows are now still more diversified by here and there a square of board instead of glass.

The master's desk is in pretty good order. The first one was knocked over in a noon-time scuffle, and so completely shattered as to render a new one necessary. This has stood about ten years.

As to the floor, had it been some winters we could not have seen it without considerable scraping away of dust and various kinds of litter; for a broom was not always provided, and boys would not wallow in the snow after hemlock, and sweeping could not so well be done with a stick. This winter, however, Mr. Ellis takes care that the floor shall be visible the greater part of the time. It is rough with sundry patches of board nailed over chinks and knot-holes made by the wear and tear of years.

Now we will look at the fire-place. One end of the hearth has sunk an inch and a half below the floor. There are crevices between some of the tiles, into which coals of fire sometimes drop and smoke up and make the boys spring for snow. The andirons have each lost a fore foot, and the office of the important member is supplied by bricks which had been dislodged from the chimney-top. The fire-shovel had acquired by accident or age a venerable stoop. The tongs can no longer be called a pair, for the lack of one of the fellow-limbs. That bar of iron running from jamb to jamb in front, how it is bent and sinking in the middle, by the pressure of the sagging fabric above. Indeed the whole chimney is quite ruinous. The bricks are loose here and there in the vicinity of the fire-place; and the chimney-top has lost so much of its cement that every high wind dashes off a brick, rolling and sliding on the roof, and then tumbling to the ground, to the danger of cracking whatever heedless skull may happen in the way.

The window-shutters after having shattered the glass by the slams of many years, have broken their own backs at length. Some have fallen to the ground, and are going the way of all things perishable. Others hang by a single hinge, which is likely to give way at the next high gale, and consign the dangling shutter to the company of its fellows below.

The clapboards are here and there loose, and dropping one by one from their fastenings. One of these thin and narrow appendages sticking by a nail at one end, and louse and alivered at the other, sends forth the most ear-rending music to the skilful touches of the North-west. In allusion to the soft-toned instrument of Æolus, it may be termed the Borean harp. Indeed so many are the avenues by which the wind passes in and out, and so various are the notes, according as the rushing air vibrates a splinter, makes the windows clatter, whistles through a knot-hole, and rumbles like big base down the chimney, that the edifice may be imagined uproarious winter's Panharmonicon, played upon in turn by all the winds.

Such is the condition of the Old School-house, supposing it to be just before we leave it forever, at the close of my thirteenth and last winter at our district school. It has been resorted to summer after summer, and winter after winter, although the observation of parents and the sensations of children have long given evidence that it ought to be abandoned.

At every meeting on school affairs that has been held for several years, the question of a new school-house has been discussed. All agree on the urgent need of one, and all are willing to contribute their portion of the wherewith; but when they attempt to decide on its location, then their harmonious action is at an end. All know that this high bleak hill, the coldest spot within a mile, is not the place; it would be stupid folly to put it here. At the foot of the hill on either side is as snug and pleasant a spot as need be. But the East-enders will not permit its location on the opposite side, and the West-enders are as obstinate on their part. Each division declares that it will secede and form a separate district should it be carried further off, although in this case they must put up with much cheaper teachers, or much less schooling, or submit to twice the taxes.

Thus they have tossed the ball of discussion, and sometimes hurled that of contention back and forth, year after year, to just about as much profit, as their children have flung snow-balls in play, or chips and cakes of ice when provoked. At length Time, the final decider of all things material, wearied with their jabs, is likely to end them by tumbling the old ruin about their ears.

Months have passed; it is near winter again. There is great rejoicing among the children, satisfaction among the parents, harmony between the two ends. A new School-house has been erected at



has—indeed it has. A door of reconciliation and mutual adjustment was opened in the following manner.

The powerful-to-do, but tardy personage, the Public, began to be weary of ascending and descending Capt. Clark's hill. He began to calculate the value of time and horse-flesh. One day it occurred to him that it would be as 'cheap and indeed much cheaper,' to go round this hill at the bottom than to go round it over the top; for it is just as far from side to side of a ball in one direction as in another, and this was a case somewhat similar. He perceived that there would be no more gained in the long run by the expense of carrying the road an eighth of a mile to the South, and all on level ground, than there would be by still wasting the breath of horse and the patience of man in panting up and tottering down this monstrous hill. It seemed as if he had been blind for years not to have conceived of the improvement before. No time was to be lost now. He lifted up his many-tongued voice, and put forth his many-handed strength, and in the process of a few months a road was constructed, curving round the south side of the aforesaid hill, which after all, proved to be but a few rods longer from point to point, than the other.

The district were no longer at variance about the long needed edifice. The afore-mentioned improvement had scarcely been decided on, before every one perceived how the matter might be settled. A school meeting was soon called, and it was unanimously agreed to erect a new school-house on the new road, almost exactly opposite the old spot, and as equidistant from the two Ends, it was believed, as the equator is from the poles.

Here Mr. Henry taught the District School somewhat as it should be; and it has never since been kept as it was.

**FIRST SUMMER AT SCHOOL.**—*A fine specimen of a female teacher.*—I was three years and a half old when I first entered the Old School-house as an abecedarian. I ought perhaps to have set foot on the first step of learning's ladder before this, but I had no elder brother or sister to lead me to school a mile off; and it never occurred to my good parents that they could teach me even the alphabet. Or perhaps they could not afford the time, or muster the patience for the tedious process. I had, however, learned the name of capital A, because it stood at the head of the column, and was the similitude of a harrow frame. Of O, also, from its resemblance to a hoop. Its sonorous name, moreover, was a frequent passenger through my mouth after I had begun to articulate, its ample sound being the most natural medium by which man born unto trouble signifies the pains of his lot. X too, was familiar, as it seemed so like the end of the old saw-horse that stood in the wood-shed. Further than this my alphabetical lore did not extend, according to present recollection.

Mary Smith was my first teacher, and the dearest to my heart I ever had. She was a niece of Mrs. Carter, who lived in the nearest house on the way to school. She had visited her aunt the winter before, and her uncle being chosen committee for the school at the town-meeting in the spring, sent immediately to her home in Connecticut, and engaged her to teach the summer school. During the few days she had spent at his house, she had shown herself peculiarly qualified to interest and gain the love of children. Some of the neighbors, too, who had dropped in while she was there, were much pleased with her appearance. She had taught one season in her native state, and that she succeeded well Mr. Carter could not doubt. He preferred her, therefore, to hundreds near by, and for *one the partiality of the relative proved profitable to the district.*

She used to lead me to school by the hand, while John and Sarah Carter gambled on, unless I chose to gambol with them; but the first day, at least, I kept by her side. All her demeanor toward me, and indeed toward us all, was of a piece with her first introduction. She called me to her to read, not with a look and voice as if she were doing a duty she disliked, and was determined I should do mine too, like it or not, as is often the manner of teachers; but with a cheerful smile and softening eye, as if she were at a pastime, and wished me to partake of it.

My first business was to master the A B C, and no small achievement it was; for many a little learner waddles to school through the summer, and wallows to the same through the winter, before he accomplishes it, if he happens to be taught in the manner of former times. This might have been my lot had it not been for Mary Smith. Few of the better methods of teaching which now make the road to knowledge so much more easy and pleasant, had then found their way out of, or into the brain of the pedagogical vocation. Mary went on in the old way indeed, but the whole exercise was done with such sweetness on her part, that the dilatory and usually unpleasant task, was to me a pleasure, and consumed not so much precious time as it generally does in the case of heads as stupid as mine. By the close of that summer the alphabet was securely my own. That hard, and to me unmeaning string of sights and sounds, were bound forever to my memory by the ties created by gentle tones and looks.

The hardest of all tasks, sitting becomingly still, was rendered easier by her goodness. When I grew restless, and turned from

side to side, and changed from posture to posture, in search of relief from my uncomfortableness, she spoke words of sympathy rather than reproof. Thus I was won to be as quiet as I could. When I grew drowsy and needed but a comfortable position to drop into sleep and forgetfulness of the weary hours, she would gently lay me at length on my seat, and leave me just falling to slumber, with her sweet smile the last thing beheld or remembered.

Thus wore away my first summer at the district school. As I look back on it, faintly traced on memory, it seems like a beautiful dream, the images of which are all softness and peace. I recollect that when the last day came, it was not one of light hearted joy, it was one of sadness, and it closed in tears. I was now obliged to stay at home in solitude, for the want of play-mates, and in weariness of the passing time, for the want of something to do, for there was no particular pleasure in saying A B C, all alone, with no Mary Smith's voice and looks for an accompaniment.

**FIRST WINTER AT SCHOOL.**—How I longed for the winter school to begin, to which I looked forward as a relief from my do-nothing days, and as a renewal, in part at least, of the soft and gliding pleasures of the past summer.

The winter at length came, and the first day of the school was fixed and made known, and the longed for morning finally arrived. With hoping, yet fearing heart, I was led by Ben to school. But my fears respecting the teacher were not realized that winter. He had nothing particularly remarkable about him to my little mind. He had his hands too full of the great things of the great scholars to take much notice of me, excepting to hear me read my A's four times a day. This exercise he went through like a great machine, and I like a little one, so monotonous was the humdrum and regular recurrence of ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, &c., from day to day, and week to week. To recur to the metaphor of a ladder by which progress in learning is so often illustrated, I was all summer on the first round, as it were, lifting first one foot and then the other, still putting it down in the same place, without going any higher; and all winter while at school, I was as wearily tap-tapping it on the second step, with the additional drawback of not having Mary Smith's sweet manners to win me up to the stand, help me cheerfully through the task, and set me down again, pleased with her if nothing else.

The severest duty I was ever called to perform was sitting on that little front seat at my first winter school. My lesson in the A's conveyed no idea, excited no interest, and of course occupied but very little of my time. There was nothing before me on which to lean my head, or lay my arms, but my own knees. I could not lie down to drowse as in summer, for want of room on the crowded seat. How my limbs ached for the freedom and activity of play. It sometimes seemed as if a drubbing from the master, or a kick across the school-house would have been a pleasant relief.

But these bonds upon my limbs were not all. I had trials by fire in addition. Every cold forenoon, the old fire-place, wide and deep, was kept a roaring furnace of flame, for the benefit of blue noses, chattering jaws and aching toes, in the more distant regions. The end of my seat just opposite the chimney, was cozy with melting pitch and sometimes almost smoked with combustion. Judge then of what living flesh had to bear. It was a toil to exist. I truly ate the bread of instruction, or rather nibbled at the crust of it, in the sweat of my face.

But the pleasures and pains of this season at school did not continue long. After a few weeks the storms and drifts of midwinter kept me mostly at home. Henry Allen was in the same predicament. As for Susan Clark, she did not go at all after the first three or four days. In consequence of the sudden change from roasting within doors to freezing without, she took a violent cold and was sick all winter.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS' SEMINARIES.

BY CALVIN E. STOWE, D. D.

"I promised God, that I would look upon every Prussian peasant child as a being who could complain of me before God, if I did not provide for him the best education, as a man and a Christian, which it was possible for me to provide."  
*Dinter's Letter to Baron Von Altenstein.*

When the benevolent Franke turned his attention to the subject of popular education in the city of Hamburg, late in the seventeenth century, he soon found that children could not be well taught without good teachers, and that but few good teachers could be found unless they were regularly trained for the profession. Impressed with this conviction, he bent all his energies towards the establishment of a Teachers' Seminary, in which he finally succeeded, at Halle, in Prussia, about the year 1704; and from this first institution of the kind in Europe, well-qualified teachers were soon spread over all the north of Germany, who prepared the way for that great revolution in public instruction, which has since been so happily accomplished under the auspices of Frederick William III. and his praiseworthy coadjutors. Every enlightened man, who, since the time of Franke, has in earnest turned his attention to the same subject,

been brought to the same result; and the recent movements in France, in Scotland; in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-York, Ohio and other States in the American Union, all attest the very great difficulty, if not entire impossibility, of carrying out an efficient system of public instruction without seminaries expressly designed for the preparation of teachers.

Having devoted some attention to this subject, and having spent considerable time in examining institutions of the kind already established in Europe, I propose in this paper to exhibit the result of my investigations. In exhibiting this result I have thought proper to draw out, somewhat in detail, what I suppose would be the best plan, on the whole, without expecting that all parts of the plan, in the present state of education in our country, will be carried into immediate execution. I propose what I think ought to be aimed at, and what I doubt not will ultimately be attained, if the spirit which is now awake on the subject be not suffered again to sleep.

The sum of what I propose is contained in the six following propositions, namely:

I. The interests of popular education in each State demand the establishment, at the seat of government, and under the patronage of the Legislature, of a Normal School,\* that is, a *Teachers' Seminary* and model-school, for the instruction and practice of teachers in the science of education and the art of teaching.

II. Pupils should not be received into the Teachers' Seminary under sixteen years of age, nor until they are well versed in all the branches usually taught in common schools.

III. The model-school should comprise the various classes of children usually admitted to the common schools, and should be subject to the same general discipline and course of study.

IV. The course of instruction in the Teachers' Seminary should include three years, and the pupils be divided into three classes, accordingly.

V. The senior classes in the Teachers' Seminary should be employed, under the immediate instruction of their professors, as instructors in the model-school.

VI. The course of instruction in the Teachers' Seminary should comprise lectures and recitations on the following topics, together with such others as further observation and experience may show to be necessary:

1. A thorough, scientific, and demonstrative study of all the branches to be taught in the common schools, with directions at every step as to the best method of inculcating each lesson upon children of different dispositions and capacities, and various intellectual habits.

2. The philosophy of mind, particularly in reference to its susceptibility of receiving impressions from mind.

3. The peculiarities of intellectual and moral development in children, as modified by sex, parental character, wealth or poverty, city or country, family government, indulgent or severe, fickle or steady, &c. &c.

4. The science of education in general, and full illustrations of the difference between education and mere instruction.

5. The art of teaching.

6. The art of governing children, with special reference to imparting and keeping alive a feeling of love for children.

7. History of education, including an accurate outline of the educational systems of different ages and nations, the circumstances which gave rise to them, the principles on which they were founded, the ends which they aimed to accomplish, their successes and failures, their permanency and changes, how far they influenced individual and national character, how far any of them might have originated in premeditated plan on the part of their founders, whether they secured the intelligence, virtue, and happiness of the people, or otherwise, with the causes, &c.

8. The rules of health, and the laws of physical development.

9. Dignity and importance of the teacher's office.

10. Special religious obligations of teachers in respect to benevolent devotedness to the intellectual and moral welfare of society, habits of entire self-control, purity of mind, elevation of character, &c.

11. The influence which the school should exert on civilization and the progress of society.

12. The elements of Latin, together with the German, French, and Spanish languages.

On each of the topics above enumerated, I shall attempt to offer such remarks as may be necessary to their more full development and illustration; and then state the argument in favor of, and answer the objections which may be urged against, the establishment of such an institution as is here contemplated.

To begin with the first proposition.

\* The French adjective *normal* is derived from the Latin noun *norma*, which signifies a carpenter's square, a rule, a pattern, a model; and the very general use of this term to designate institutions for the preparation of teachers, leads us at once to the idea of a *model-school for practice*, as an essential constituent part of a *Teachers' Seminary*.

I. The interests of popular education in each State demand the establishment, at the seat of government, and under the patronage of the Legislature, of a Normal School, that is, a Teachers' Seminary and model-school, for the instruction and practice of teachers in the science of education and the art of teaching.

If there be necessity for such an institution, there can be little doubt that the Legislature should patronize and sustain it; for, now as our country is, and numerous as are the objects to which individual capital must be applied, there can be no great hope, for many years to come, of seeing such institutions established and supported by private munificence. It is a very appropriate object of legislative patronage; for, as the advantages of such an institution are clearly open to all the citizens of the State, and equally necessary to all, it is right that each should sustain his proper share of the expense.

Reserving my general argument in favor of these establishments till after a more full development of their object, organization, and course of study, I shall confine my remarks under this head to the subject of legislative patronage, and the influence which such an institution would exert, through the Legislature and officers of government, on the people at large. And in order that the institution may exert the influence here contemplated, it will appear obviously necessary that it be placed at the seat of government.

Popular legislators ought to have some objects in view besides the irritating and often petty questions of party politics. Any observing man, who has watched the progress of popular legislation among us, cannot but have noticed the tendency of continued and uninterrupted party bickering to narrow the mind and sour the temper of political men, to make them selfish, unpatriotic, and unprincipled. It is highly necessary for their improvement as men, and as republican lawgivers, that the bitterness and bigotry of party strife should sometimes be checked by some great object of public utility, in which good men of all parties may unite, and the contemplation and discussion of which shall enlarge the views and elevate the affections. The Legislatures of several States have already had experience of these benefits. The noble institutions for deaf mutes, for the blind, and for the insane, which have grown up under their care, and been sustained by their bounty, are not less beneficial by the moral influence they exert, every year, on the officers of government who witness their benevolent operations, than by the physical and intellectual blessings which they confer on the unfortunate classes of persons for whom they were more particularly designed. Who can witness the proficiency of the blind and the mute in that knowledge which constitutes the charm of life, as witnessed in the annual exhibitions of these institutions at Columbus, during the sessions of the Legislature, without feeling the blessedness of benevolence, and inwardly resolving to be himself benevolent? Without some such objects in view, political character deteriorates, and the legislator sinks to the demagogue. When our American Congress has had noble objects in view; when it has been struggling for the rights of man, and the great principles which are the foundation of free institutions, it has been the nursery of patriotism and the theatre of great thoughts and mighty deeds; but when its objects have been mean, and its aims selfish, how sad the reverse in respect to its moral character and national influence!

Colleges, and institutions for the higher branches of classical learning, have seldom flourished in this country under legislative patronage; because the people at large, not perceiving that these institutions are directly beneficial to them allow their legislators to give them only a hesitating, reluctant, and insufficient support. No steady, well-digested plan of improvement is carried consistently through, but the measures are vacillating, contradictory, and often destructive, not from want of sagacity to perceive what is best, but simply from want of interest in the object, and a consequent determination to maintain it at the cheapest rate. But an institution of the kind here contemplated, the people at large will feel to be for their immediate benefit. It is to qualify teachers for the instruction of their own children; and among the people throughout most of the free States, there is an appreciation of the advantages and necessity of good common-school instruction, which makes them willing to incur heavy sacrifices for the sake of securing it. They will, therefore, cheerfully sustain their legislators in any measure which is seen to be essential to the improvement and perfection of the common-school system; and that the establishment of a Normal School is essential to this, I expect to prove in the course of this discussion.

Supposing the institution to be established at the seat of government, under proper auspices, the Legislature would every year witness its beneficial results; they would attend the exhibitions of its pupils both in the seminary and in the model-school, as they now, in several States, attend the exhibitions of the blind and mute; their views would be enlarged, their affections moved, their ideas of what constitutes good education settled; they would return to their constituents full of zeal and confidence in the educational cause, and impart the same to them; they would learn how schools ought to be conducted, the respective duties of parents, teachers, and school officers; they would become the most efficient missionaries



of public instruction; and, ere long, one of the most important errands from their constituents would be, to find for them, in the Teachers' Seminary, a suitable instructor for their district school. Such an influence will be to the school system, what electricity is to the operations of Nature, an influence unceasing, all-pervading, lightning-winged.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in every State, would be essentially aided by such an institution at the seat of government. He greatly needs it as a fulcrum to pry over, when he would move the Legislature or the people. He cannot bring the Legislature to the common schools, nor these to the Legislature, to illustrate existing deficiencies or recommend improvements; but here is a model constructed under his own eye, which he can at any moment exhibit to the Legislature, and by which he can give complete illustrations of all his views.

As the young men in the seminary grow up, he watches their progress, and ascertains the peculiar qualifications and essential characteristics of each individual; and, as he passes through the State, and learns the circumstances and wants of each community, he knows where to find the teacher best fitted to carry out his views, and give efficiency to the system in each particular location. Nothing is lost; the impression which he makes is immediately followed up and deepened by the teacher, before it has time to cool and disappear. A superintendent of schools without a Teacher's Seminary, is a general without soldiers, depending entirely on the services of such volunteers as he can pick up on his march, most of whom enlist but for the day, and go home to sleep at night.

Such is a brief view of the reasons for legislative patronage, and a location at the seat of government. I do not imagine that one institution will be enough to supply the wants of a whole State; but let the one be established first, and whatever others are needful will speedily follow.\*

We now proceed to our second general proposition.

II. Pupils should not be received into the Teachers' Seminary under sixteen years of age, nor until they are well versed in all the branches usually taught in the common schools.

The age at which the pupils leave the common school is the proper age for entering the Teachers' Seminary, and the latter should begin just where the former closes. This is young enough; for few persons have their judgments sufficiently matured, or their feelings under sufficient control, to engage in school-teaching by themselves, before they are twenty years old. It is not the design of the Teachers' Seminary to go through the common routine of the common-school course, but a thorough grounding in this is to be assumed as the foundation on which to erect the structure of the teacher's education.

III. The model-school should comprise the various classes of children usually admitted to the common schools, and should be subject to the same general discipline and course of study.

The model-school, as its name imports, is to be a model of what the common-school ought to be; and it must be, therefore, composed of like materials, and subject to similar rules. The model-school, in fact, should be the common school of the place in which the Teachers' Seminary is situated; it should aim to keep in advance of every other school in the State, and every other school in the State should aim to keep up with that. It is a model for the constant inspection of the pupils in the teachers' department, a practical illustration of the lessons they receive from their professors; the proof-stone by which they are to test the utility of the abstract principles they imbibe, and on which they are to exercise and improve their gifts of teaching. Indeed, as School-counsellor Dinter told a nobleman of East Prussia, to set up a Teachers' Seminary without a model-school, is like setting up a shoe-maker's shop without leather.

IV. The course of instruction in the Teacher's Seminary should include three years, and the pupil's be divided into three classes, accordingly.

The course of study, as will be seen by inspecting it in the following pages, cannot well be completed in less time than this; this has been found short enough for professional study in the other professions, which is generally commenced at a maturer age, and after the pupil has had the advantage of an academical or collegiate course; and if it is allowed that five or seven years are not too much to be spent in acquiring the trade of a blacksmith, a carpenter, or any of the common indispensable handicrafts, surely three years will not be deemed too much for the difficult and most important art of teaching.

V. The senior class in the Teachers' Seminary should be employed, under the immediate inspection of their professors, as instructors in the model school. The model-school is intended to be not only an illustration of the principles inculcated theoretically in the seminary, but is calculated also as a school for practice, in

which the seminary pupils may learn, by actual experiment, the practical bearing of the principles which they have studied. After two years of theoretical study, the pupils are well qualified to commence the practical course, under the immediate inspection of their professors; and the model-school being under the inspection of such teachers, it is obvious that its pupils can suffer no loss, but must be great gainers by the arrangement.

This is a part of the system for training teachers which cannot be dispensed with, and any considerable hope of success retained. To attempt to train practical teachers without it, would be like attempting to train sailors by keeping boys upon Bowditch's Navigator, without ever suffering them to go on board a ship, or handle a rope-yarn. One must begin to teach, before he can begin to be a teacher; and it is infinitely better, both for himself and his pupils, that he should make this beginning under the eye of an experienced teacher, who can give him directions and point out his errors, than that he should blunder on alone, at the risk of ruining multitudes of pupils, before he can learn to teach by the slow process of unaided experience.

### CONFESSIONS OF A SCHOOL MASTER.

ANDOVER, Gould, Newman & Saxton.

This little work should be read by every teacher in the state, especially by every young teacher. Parents and school officers can find much in it to remind them of duties forgotten or neglected in reference to common schools. It is a faithful exhibition of facts as they occurred during ten or twelve years experience as a common school master, and school-committee man. The author commenced his career as nineteen out of every twenty common school teachers are obliged to commence theirs, without any of the benefits of experience. He was compelled to learn every thing as he advanced, by observation, experiment and reflection. This little work gives the details of the author's experience and observation—the errors, the corrections, the improvements and the suggestions, as they occurred. It abounds in valuable principles, presented in their natural connections with the facts out of which they grew, and with which, under similar circumstances, they will always be connected. Without subscribing to all of the opinions advanced, we have no hesitation in recommending it to the general and attentive perusal of parents, school officers and teachers. We shall enrich our columns with extracts.

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL-KEEPING.—My preparation for school keeping consisted, principally, in attending the district school near my native home, from three to four months every winter, from the age of four to thirteen, and a few months every summer from that of four to eight. Between the ages of thirteen and seventeen, I was permitted, however, to go to school to the parish minister, who kept a kind of high school every winter, in all about six months.

One or two of my first teachers succeeded in inspiring me with emulation and ambition; and being naturally of a sanguine temperament, with a retentive memory, I usually succeeded in attaining and keeping at the head of the class; even in spite of the efforts of those who were much older than myself to "get above me," as it was called. It was of course, soon noised abroad that I was very "forward;" had good learning," etc. This in truth only meant, had it been duly analyzed, that I was a good monkey or parrot; for precedence in the class was made to depend wholly on our skill at the mere spelling of words—and that, too, by rote, or column. But no matter for that; such was the common report; and I had all the credit of it.

When I was eighteen years of age, my father was appointed committee of the school district in which he resided. The question soon came up, whom they should employ to teach their school the ensuing winter.\* It is true no district meeting had, as yet, been held; but it was usual for the neighbors to talk the matter over beforehand, in order to prepare the way.

Certain individuals—I never knew who, and no matter—suggested to my father that it would be well for me to teach the school. Your son, has good learning; he lives near the school house, and could board at home; and your business is such that he could pay his board by his labor.

\* It was not customary to employ a male teacher in the summer, in that vicinity.

\* This article was written in its special reference to Ohio, and the new States of the West. In some of the older States, the expense of living at the seat of government might operate as an objection to the location of the Seminary there.

My father, though much flattered, was rather surprised by this proposal. In the first place I suppose he did not think I was old enough, or my judgment mature enough to keep a school.

There was another inquiry very prominent in my father's mind; which was, whether his son had the art of governing well. This art was, in that region, regarded as a peculiar gift of Heaven. The doctrine that any person of good natural parts and abilities can govern well, or if not able to do so at once, can by observation, study, and experience, soon acquire a good degree of this necessary art, had not, as yet, been brought forward in that region; and had it been so, would have been deemed a strange innovation—not to say a dangerous heresy.

The father had "a diseased delicacy" (not always found now-a-days in case of relatives) about employing his own son, so he declined, and the mantle of office was transferred to an uncle. A school meeting was called. It consisted of the very respectable number of three. These individuals had some objection to employing our "school master," principally because he asked ten dollars and was to board himself, whereas Mr. B., in a neighboring district, had only eight and his board; and Mr. H., only seven. The author seems to think that the principal reason why the proprietors preferred boarding a teacher was to save a dollar or two a month of the money. However, the meeting waived their objections, and decided to employ him for three months. Thirty dollars was as much of the public money as they could spare for the winter school.

Winter schools, in that part of the country, were usually continued about three or four months; though the length of the term was always to be determined by the price of the master. They had every year about the same amount of money from the public treasury; and that was exactly expended in paying the teachers of the summer and winter school. If the teacher was employed at a lower price his services could be continued longer; but if he was paid more, the term must be shortened. Before the State had a public fund, they had been compelled to tax themselves, not only in regard to wood and board, but also to pay the teacher; but it had now become quite uncommon to lay a tax to pay a master. Indeed, few thought they could possibly afford it. Though far more able to pay the tax their fathers had paid twenty years before than they were, they felt far less so; and while their fathers had raised, in this way, some thirty, forty, fifty or sixty dollars a year, they thought they could not endure a tax of five dollars.

**THE EXAMINATION.**—The next thing for me to do, was to be examined by the Board of School Visitors. In some towns this Board held stated meetings for the examination of candidates—a course which ought always to be pursued—but in my native town it had never been done. When a person wished to be examined, he was obliged to "hunt up" the visitors, unless—as sometimes happened, especially if the candidate was a lady—the district committee happened to have politeness enough to attend to it.

How I collected the Board I have forgotten. Not so the results of the meeting. These are not so easily effaced from my memory; nor will they be till the day of my death.

The Board consisted of the parson, the physician and a captain of the militia. The following is the account of the examination.

The parson was to commence. How many sounds has B? was the first question. Though B is called a mute, and is one of the more difficult letters for the embarrassed or diffident person to enunciate, and though I did not expect they would begin thus, yet I soon recollected what I had so often repeated at school; and faintly articulated—B has but one sound, as in *bite*.

How many sounds has C? The reply to this question was more ready than the former; for having once broken the ice, and that successfully, all now seemed to go on very smoothly. I could have repeated the "Introduction to the Spelling Book," as it is called, in which they were then examining me, from beginning to end without a failure. There was indeed a little trouble, when questions were asked promiscuously, but such an event did not often occur.

I was also required to spell. In this exercise, as I have already observed, I was pretty correct. I could not only spell all the common words of the spelling book, but also recollect them if they were separated from their companions. And although I now dislike this method of teaching to spell, believing it to involve a great waste of valuable time, yet it certainly made me a speller. I do not remem-

ber the time when there were more than half a dozen words in common use which I spelt wrong, even in writing.

But I was required to repeat the rules of common arithmetic, and to read and write. The rules of arithmetic I had at my tongue's end, and I believe I understood their import.

As to writing, my hand was too unsteady, just at that time, to write well.

My deficiency in regard to reading was most obvious. I read too loud, and too fast; as well as in a tone of voice altogether different from that of common conversation. This habit I had acquired during my first years at school, in reading in books whose language I did not understand; and to the meaning of which none of my teachers ever furnished me with a clue. Besides I did not articulate well.

This branch, however,—strange as it may appear to some—the Committee did not deem an important part of their examination. They had embraced the opinion—very common in the world, as I have since found—that a teacher who cannot read well himself, can teach others to read well. They seemed wholly to overlook the force of example in this matter, and the fact that children learn to read chiefly by imitating others. I do not say that they learn to pronounce the words when they see them in a book, in this way; but I do not regard that as worthy of the name of reading. It has already been observed that Grammar and Geography were not taught in the school which I had engaged to teach. And as they were not taught, the committee were not accustomed to examine the candidate in regard to them. They had adopted the fashionable idea that it is unnecessary for a teacher to understand any other branches except those which he teaches; forgetting that the sciences are a circle, and that in order to have a perfectly practical and correct view of one, it is really necessary to have a tolerable knowledge of them all. Indeed, such an idea, at that time—I wish it were not so, even now—would, in all probability, have excited ridicule.

There was one more reason, I confess, why they adopted such a principle of examination. Not one in three—probably not one in six—of the individuals who presented themselves for examination as candidates for the teaching of our schools in those days, knew anything of grammar or geography; and some were mere blockheads in arithmetic. Had those branches been required therefore, the districts would have been deprived of their teachers; and this would, in the end, have raised a "hue and cry," against the committee.

Shall the teacher retire, said Dr. Physic, while we consult together? That is quite unnecessary, said the parson. Captain, said he, you are the youngest, what do you say to giving the candidate a certificate? Aye, or Nay? Aye, said the Captain. Aye, said the Doctor, in his turn. And I say aye, too, said the parson. So saying, they wrote me a certificate.

Before we parted, however, the parson gave me a long lecture on the solemn responsibilities about to devolve upon me, in my new and untried station; that I was to consider myself not only responsible to my employers, but to the children themselves, as creatures destined to immortality; and above all, that I must consider myself responsible to God. His remarks were excellent; but I suppose they did me about as much good as they usually do young candidates in the same circumstances, that is, none at all. They are misplaced. They should come in somewhere else; say at the first official visit of the Committee to the School.

Was this the whole of the examination? perhaps some inquisitive reader may ask. I have related the substance of it; not always the very words. Nor have I related all the minutiae of the conversation. What I have told is truth; only I have not been particular to give the whole truth in every instance.

"Was nothing then said to you about the management and discipline of a school?" Not a word, that I remember. All the examinations I had ever been acquainted with at that time, seemed to be based on the opinion that if a person understood a science or thing himself, he could teach it well to others. As to governing a school, I believe I have already mentioned that the erroneous opinion prevailed that this was a "gift," or rather as some seemed to regard it, a matter of mere haphazard.

It is passing strange to me, that the manners and morals, and even the health of a teacher are not made subjects of examination at these meetings. But were the propriety of either or all these doubted, I should still be astonished that no pains is taken to ascertain the candidate's views of discipline—of praise and blame, punishment and reward, and motives to action. Would he praise largely and promiscuously, or sparingly and discriminately? Would he resort often to punishment; and if so, to what forms of it? Would he allow of emulation as a motive to action; and if not what would be the substitute for it? These and a multitude more of inquiries, in the same spirit ought to be made.

Nor is it less strange—because the truth of the position involved is exceedingly obvious—that no pains is ever taken at these examinations, to find out whether the candidate has the art of teaching what he knows. A man may understand "all knowledge and all



mysteries," but if he cannot communicate that knowledge or those mysteries, is he a fit teacher of either?

It is also exceedingly strange, that no efforts are made to find out whether a teacher intends to make it a great and prominent object to form the moral character of his pupils;—whether he means to inculcate on every proper occasion the great truths of the Bible, and whether he means to enforce them by a good and christian—I do not say sectarian—example. And whether, in the direct inculcation of truth, he intends to seize on favorable moments for doing it; or whether, on the contrary, he means to go straight forward with his instructions, at all times, without reference at all to the pupil's feelings, or to the circumstances with which, at the time, he is surrounded.

Lastly; Why are no pains taken to ascertain whether the candidate for the sacred office of teacher, is truly in love with teaching? This is the grand point, after all. If a person has but the love of teaching, every other qualification will come in due time. This to the teacher, is what Paul represents charity or love to be to the Christian,—the all in all. Give me but this in full measure, and if the candidate has a large share of common sense, is in good health, and even if he have not yet taught school, is not above thirty years of age, I ask no more. He will not be a first rate teacher to day, or this year; but he will be so in due time.

#### EDUCATION OF TEACHERS.—A CARD.

The following card has been handed to us for insertion. The success which has attended the hasty, and necessarily imperfect efforts to secure the means of better qualification for the arduous and responsible office of common school teachers, at the Hartford Grammar School, is a sure demonstration of the practicability of making some legislative provision for the education of teachers. We have no hesitation in saying that a judicious application of one fifth of the sum appropriated unanimously by the House of Representatives to promote the education of teachers for common schools, in different sections of the State, would have accomplished more for the usefulness of the coming winter schools and the ultimate prosperity of the school system, than the expenditure of half the avails of the School Fund in the present way. One thousand at least of the eighteen hundred teachers, would have enjoyed an opportunity of critically revising the studies which they twill be called upon to teach, with a full explanation of all the principles involved, and with reference to the connection which one branch of knowledge bears to another, and also the best methods of communicating each, and the adaptation of different methods to different minds. They would have become familiar with the views and methods of experienced teachers, as they are carried out in better conducted schools than those with which they had been familiar with. They would have entered upon their schools with a rich fund of practical knowledge, gathered from observation, conversation, and lectures, and with many of their own defective, erroneous, and perhaps mischievous views, corrected and improved. Who can tell how many minds will be perverted, how many tempers ruined, how much injury done to the heart, the morals, and the manners of children, in consequence of the injudicious methods of inexperienced and incompetent teachers, the coming winter? The heart, the manners, the morals, the minds of the children are, or should be, in the eye of the State, too precious materials for a teacher to experiment upon, with a view to qualify himself for his profession, and yet the teacher is compelled to do so under the present order of things. He has no opportunity afforded him, as every mechanic has, to learn his trade, and if he had, there is but little inducement held out for him to do so. No man is so insane as to employ a workman to construct any valuable or delicate piece of mechanism, who is to learn how to do it for the first time on that very article. No one employs any other than an experienced artist to repair a watch. No parent entrusts the management of a lawsuit, involving his property or his reputation, to an attorney who has not studied his profession and given evidence of his ability. No one sends for a physician to administer to his health, who has not studied the human constitution and the nature and uses of medicine. No one sends a shoe to be mended, or a horse to be shod, or a plough to be repaired, except to an experienced workman, and yet parents will employ teachers, who are to educate their children for two worlds—who are to mould and fashion and develop that most delicate, complicated, and wonderful piece of mechanism, the human being, the most delicate and wonderful of all God's

creations—to fit them for usefulness in life, to become upright and intelligent witnesses, jurors, electors, legislators and rulers, safe in their power to resist the manifold temptations to vice and crime which will beset their future path, strong and happy in the "godlike union of right feelings with correct principles."

We have pursued this subject further than we intended at this time. But it is one which involves the immediate and ultimate prosperity of our common schools, and until it is properly appreciated and practically acted upon, their capacity to better the condition of society to diffuse the elements of happiness and usefulness broadcast over society, to realize the glorious theory and intention of our political organization, to make our State and common country the theatre of a more noble equality of condition and employment, of a higher and broader civilization than the world has yet seen, can not be tested and developed. But we must leave the subject here. In the meantime we invite the candid and considerate attention of all who are interested in the increasing prosperity of our schools—and who is not?—to the article of Prof. Stowe, which we have commenced re-publishing in this number. The country has few better educators—the common schools have few more intelligent and eloquent advocates—the people have few friends who sympathize more sincerely with their wants and their noble aspirations—New England can point to but few better specimens of her enterprising and educated men, than Prof. Stowe.

Sprung from the ranks of the people, nurtured in the lap of honest poverty, indebted to common schools for his early taste for reading and study, which he cultivated amid discouragements that would have appalled any other than a New England spirit, indebted to education obtained in common schools, in colleges, in the retirement of his own study and by travel at home and abroad, for all that he is and all his capacity for usefulness, he is now doing all that he can to bring the means of a higher and every way more practical education within reach of the children of the poor, as well as the rich, and to make the common schools the security of our liberties—the fountains of our individual, social and national happiness. The views of such a mind, with the means he has had of forming a sound judgment, are entitled to serious consideration.

#### A CARD.

The members of the Teachers' Class, at the Hartford Grammar School, would return their most cordial thanks to those benevolent individuals to whom they are indebted for the very excellent course of instruction which they have been permitted to enjoy during a few weeks past. They also beg leave to present their sincere thanks to those gentlemen who have so kindly instructed them; for the very familiar, lucid, and interesting manner in which the different subjects have been presented.

E. K. FITCHCOCK, S. E. COLTON, IRA A. KIMBALL, Jr., ELISHA WILLIAMS, WM. H. PERRY,	} Committee in behalf of the Class.
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Hartford, Nov. 4th, 1839.

#### SCHOOL MEETINGS IN OCTOBER.

We have attended meetings of the friends of our schools in the following places. At these meetings encouraging evidence was given that the cause of school improvement was making some progress. We hope that the free intercourse and interchange of opinions which these assemblings led to, will not be without good results to the winter schools.

**HARTFORD COUNTY. WETHERFIELD.**—The meeting which was held in the 1st School Society in September, has resulted in the establishment of a High School for all children over twelve years of age in this society.

**WINDSOR HILL.**—There was a large number of young men connected with the Theological Institution, who will soon be the settled ministers of Connecticut and other states, present. It is very desirable that they and such as will fill the same responsible posts elsewhere should regard the common school as Luther did, as the basis of the permanent establishment of Protestant Christianity.

**WAREHOUSE POINT.**—This village is finely situated for a gradation of schools. One of the best located and built school houses in the county—a compact population—a sufficient number of children under sixteen to admit of the employment

of three teachers—are advantages which should not be thrown away on an inferior school, and the patronage of one or two select schools.

**ENFIELD CENTRE.**—Enfield is one of the few towns in Connecticut which has continued to manifest a lively interest in the increasing usefulness of common schools. Instead of diminishing the school tax as the avails of public money increased, they have kept on the old tax and united the two, and thus have maintained, on the whole, better common schools than any other town in Hartford county. There is room for improvement here. School houses need repairs—a gradation of schools should be adopted, and we have no doubt all this and much more will be done soon. Enfield will not lose its pre-eminence.

**ENFIELD—Thompsonville.**—Although a late hour was named for the meeting, and most of the inhabitants were engaged in the factories and workshops up to eight o'clock, the meeting was fully attended. The natives of Scotland have brought with them a taste for reading, and the same desire to have good schools, which made Scotland at one time the best educated country in Europe. There is a good spirit prevailing here.

**WINDSOR LOCKS.**—Here is a sufficiently compact and numerous district to have as good a district school as can be desired. We trust the inhabitants of the district will not throw away their advantages for establishing a gradation of schools—one for the older children, and a second for the younger, by dividing the district. The division will perpetuate all the evils of the common school, as it is—every age, study and book under teachers constantly changing in each of the districts.

**HARTFORD, 1st S. Society.**—We attended the annual Society meeting, and a more mortifying exhibition of the apathy which pervades most of our large cities in reference to common school education, could not be given. The town meeting was called at the same hour and place. The school meeting was opened by the appointment of Moderator. The voters assembled were invited to take part in the doings of the meeting. All but seven, (and but three or four of this number were legal voters) out of the one hundred and fifty who were present in the hall, remained at a distance from the scene of action. Some formal business was gone through. The committee of last year were nominated to the same offices. The reading of the report of school visitors was called for, the friends of the common schools were again invited to attend, and three more joined "the forlorn hope" of the schools in the first school society in Hartford. But such was the impatience manifested in the other part of the room—so much of a farce was it all becoming, that it was moved to adjourn the school meeting until the close of the town meeting, and then resume the reading of the Report. This was done. The town meeting was then opened. A commendable degree of interest was immediately manifested. A hundred and more ballots were cast for the choice of assessors and a board of relief. All were interested to know who should sit in judgment upon their property, while ten minutes before nearly all were indifferent how the children now in the schools, and the children who will follow them, should be educated; and yet upon their education hangs the ultimate value and security of that property.

The meeting wound up with an animated discussion on a proposed ordinance, or by-law, relating to the killing of game, which, after sundry amendments, in drafting which the skill of several lawyers had been exhausted, was passed, so that quails, snipes, and wood-cocks are protected for certain months from such mischievous boys whose ideas had been taught too soon how to shoot. All this was done, we suppose, that the aforesaid birds might become better game for more thorough bred sportsmen, and sweeter and richer morsels for better educated epicures.

These important matters having received due consideration, the meeting adjourned, not however until notice of the school meeting to be resumed immediately after, had been announced. But the quick tread of retiring feet, as though a district infected with the plague was to be escaped, was heard, and the image of Washington which occupies one end of the Hall, instead of looking down on a numerous assembly, with hearts full of love of country and wood-cock, and a holy horror of taxes and interlopers, smiled complacently upon six or seven bachelors who had remained behind to see that if people will have

children, these children should become as little annoyances as possible to their peace and property.

It was cold, gloomy business to come down to the discussion of school topics after those warm, spicy debates about quails and wood-cock, and even the "old standards" began to grow impatient. So the "substance" of the Report was stated by the Moderator, who happened to be the author of the document. A communication from the Town Association for the improvement of common schools, on the establishment of a high school, was read, the two documents with their proposed measures to improve the schools, were referred to a committee with instructions to print, and to take the whole matter into consideration, and the meeting then adjourned to meet again early next month. It requires no prophet's eye to see that "little Spartan band" re-assembling on the 5th of November, supported by one or two choice spirits, whom they will take in with them by strength of the button hole, and there resolving unanimously that something should be done to interest parents more deeply in the education of their own children, and the children of their neighbors and townsmen.

But we trust they will persevere, and if they take the precaution to insert a resolution squinting at a school tax, we will warrant them a full meeting next time. There will be enough then to vote them down by as large a majority as heart could desire. But no, we will not anticipate such a result, even in playfulness.

**WINDHAM COUNTY. POMFRET.**—This town enjoys the reputation of having done more to sustain common schools than any town in this county. The cause has gained an impulse from the long continued devotion of a few intelligent friends of education. On our way to the place of meeting, we passed one school house in which the windows were so high that to look in to it, we were obliged to clamber up a pile of wood, when we were greeted by the sight of a large and comparatively commodious school room. In that house last winter was kept a school, the fame of which went out into all the districts round about, and parents and teachers resorted to it as a place of great interest and attraction. At Pomfret we saw the venerable, mouldy and dirty remains of what was once a very respectable "Social Library." Alas! these library associations have fallen away in public estimation. We hope their place will be supplied, and more than supplied, by well selected school society and district libraries. Private libraries, however extensive, cannot fill the chasm which the neglect of the old social libraries has opened, and nothing can supply the place of good books, open to the children and the grown persons of every family in a town.

**BROOKLYN.**—The annual meeting of the Windham County Association, for the improvement of common schools, was very fully attended. Judge Sharpe, the president, presided. It was just one year from the time the first meeting of the friends of school improvement was held under the new organization of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools. An address was delivered, reviewing the present state of the public mind compared with what it was when the Board commenced operations, and the evidences of improvement visible in the repairs of old school houses, and the building of new, the preparation to secure a better classification of scholars by the employment of females as assistant teachers, and the establishment of high schools and union schools for older and more advanced children, the higher standard of qualifications insisted on by school visitors, the more punctual visitation of schools by committees and parents, the efforts of teachers to become better qualified, and the higher wages that such teachers when found thus qualified are receiving, and the discussion of various propositions to improve the schools, and the school system itself. Several points of immediate practical improvement, such as the means of better ventilation, and arrangement of seats and desks in school houses, the gradation of schools, so as to avoid the evils connected with the number and variety of ages and studies now crowded into one school under one teacher, the selection of suitable text books to be recommended or prescribed by school visitors so as to do away with the now expensive and distracting variety, the more permanent employment of teachers so as to secure the benefit of their experience, and guard against the loss of time which a change of teacher always causes, and the more faithful discharge of the duties imposed on school officers, and the cordial and constant co-operation of parents with school teachers and officers



in the education of their own children, these and other topics of immediate practical improvement were presented, and seemed to commend themselves to the approbation of all present.

Resolutions, recommending them to the attention and adoption of parents, and school officers, were passed. A numerous committee, composed of school visitors and teachers, was raised, to compare their views of school books, and to recommend a selection to the schools of Windham county.

Officers were appointed for the ensuing year. Judge Sharpe declined a re-election, and Hon. Andrew T. Judson was chosen President. The propriety of dissolving the association, now that it had done its work in calling the attention of the public to the condition and improvement of common schools was discussed, but it was concluded to keep up the organization for another year. Gen. Cleveland was decidedly of the opinion that the appointment by the Legislature of a County Board of School Examiners and Visitors, to meet at certain points in the county, at stated periods, for the examination of teachers, to go from town to town, and school to school, comparing one with another, holding up such schools and school houses as were what they should be, as models for imitation, advising with school committees and teachers; that such an appointment, either for a county or a senatorial district, would, in the end, be a cheaper and more effectual way to secure a permanent and extensive advancement of our common schools than that now pursued. The suggestion is a valuable one, and we commend it to the serious consideration of the people.

We subsequently attended a school meeting in Hampton, South Killingly, Sterling, Voluntown and Canterbury. We would gladly make a brief allusion to each meeting, but cannot here.

**NEW LONDON COUNTY. PORTERSVILLE.**—One year ago the inhabitants of this enterprising village decided to divide the school district which numbered over one hundred children between the age of 4 and 16. The importance of a gradation of schools was presented to them, and they had the good sense to see that it was better to have two schools, in one of which the younger children might be governed and instructed in studies, and by methods appropriate to their ages and wants; and in the other, the older and more advanced pupils, and both schools taught by the same teachers through the year, rather than have two schools, in each of which there must be children of every age, from 4 to 16 and upwards, in every study, from A B C, to the higher branches of mathematics and philosophy, and these schools taught by one teacher in summer and another in the winter; so with almost entire unanimity, they re-considered their vote, and decided to build a school house large enough to accommodate all the children of the district in two departments. And right faithfully have the committee entrusted with this vote discharged their duty. The district has now the best school house, with the exception of the one at Greenville, in the county, and we might add, in the State. It has some defects. It is too small. There are no recitation or class rooms. The means of ventilation are not quite sufficient; but take it all in all it can be pointed to as one of the best located, best built, best internally and externally fitted up school house in the State.

The building is on a lot 60 feet front, to 200 deep, is painted white, and surmounted by a tower and bell. The lower room intended for small children, is 31 by 25 ft., with a height of 9 ft., which is too low. The window sills are nearly four ft. from the floor, and the sashes both upper and lower, are hung with weights. It is furnished with seats of different heights, so that the youngest and oldest can in every instance rest the feet on the floor, and in every case with backs. The upper room is of the same dimensions as the lower, except that it is nearly 11 ft. 4 inches in height. Each scholar is furnished with a seat and desk. The desks have a very little slope, about one inch to a foot. The front of one desk is the back to the preceding seat, and slopes so as to afford the proper inclination for the natural position of the pupil. The desks are painted green, a very agreeable color to the eye. It is, we believe, the intention of the building committee to ventilate this room by an opening in the ceiling. Each room is furnished with a desk and platform for the teacher. The work is well executed and the materials sound. It was no job in the hands of the contractors, and may be referred to as a visible manifestation of the interest which the district feels in the educa-

tion of its children, and of faithfulness on the part of the builders and the committee.

We hope the district will go on with the same spirit and liberality which has thus far marked their efforts, and when we repeat our visit that we may be able to point to the schools as kept by well qualified teachers, punctually attended by all the children of the district, and frequently visited by parents and school officers.

**NEW LONDON.**—It was a discouraging transition from Portersville to this wealthy city. We looked round for the model school house, and we found one, designed for the town Grammar School, but which was built mainly at the expense of two individuals. What must necessarily be the influence of such neglected arrangements as we found out of doors, on the manners and morals of the children who attend there? We inquired for the district school houses, and we were told that until within one or two years, there had been but one district school for the city, numbering over 1200 children of the school age. The city is now divided into three districts. One is building a school house, but—

A second has issued proposals for building what we should judge will be a very convenient school house. The location is in most respects eligible, but is too small. There is no room for a play ground, or for suitable yards for children of both sexes. As to the other, we accompanied a parent of two of the pupils who however had never felt called upon to go there before, and we found forty-seven boys in the long, narrow and arched attic of a very small building, not quite as close and hot as an oven, but too close and too hot for our friend, who had been accustomed to the free ventilation of the quarter deck. These forty-seven boys were so seated that not one of them could rest his feet on the floor, and most of them could not even touch the floor with their feet, and as for backs, some of them could lean against the narrow edge of their writing desks until the spine had got tired, and then they could lean against the thin air. Here we found a very excellent teacher, and we hope he succeeds in the work of instruction even under the manifold difficulties of such a school room. From this place, we went to the loft where the girls were receiving their education under an apparently intelligent and devoted female teacher—but such a school room, such a ceiling, such inconvenient seats!—every thing was worse, if possible, than in the former school room.

The friend who accompanied us was satisfied from this personal examination, that let the common schools of New London be as excellent as their best friends ever claimed them to be, there was ample room and verge enough for improvement in the school rooms of district No.—

The school meeting at the Court Room was very numerously attended by—the children, and by forty-eight men, women, teachers and clergymen, most of whom were personal friends of the speakers, and not five of whom had a child in the common schools.

That we may not be supposed to misrepresent the state of things in New London, we may in a subsequent number give a history of the common schools of New London for the last twenty-five years, and a few items of information in regard to juvenile offences, especially the history of "the forty thieves." Where is the patriotism, the religion of a community, which can slumber over the astounding fact, stated in a printed report of the school visitors, that there were in 1838—9, between four and five hundred children belonging to the city districts of New London, who were in no school public or private?

We subsequently met the friends of education in East Lyme, North Lyme, Salem, and Colchester. Colchester, with the munificent funds which have been left by benevolent individuals for the education of all the children of the society, should be the best educated community in the State, if funds will produce so desirable a result.

**LITCHFIELD COUNTY.** This county deserves the credit of manifesting a livelier interest in common schools than any other in the State. We cannot, however, in this place, allude to the meetings which were held here, under the appointment and invitation of Judge Church. At PLYMOUTH, WOODBURY, LITCHFIELD, and SHARON, there was a very respectable attendance. At Sharon, the meeting was addressed by Governor Smith, in his usual felicitous and striking manner. Additional interest was given by the statements of the Rev. Mr. Reed, of Salisbury, as to the Common Schools of Scotland, to which he was indebted for his education.

**SALISBURY.** It gives us fresh courage to visit a town like Salisbury, where the leading men in the community, the lawyers, physicians, and clergymen, and the more intelligent and enterprising men are willing to co-operate together in the work of securing the means of a better education to all the children of the town. The efforts of such men as Judge Church, Mr. John Whittlesey and others, (to name all would occupy more room than we can here give to the whole subject,) is seen in the more liberal and united efforts of the town to improve its common schools. At the late town meeting, a proposition to subscribe for a copy of this Journal, for each district, was passed unanimously, and some twenty or thirty copies have been subsequently taken by individuals. The schools of Salisbury

have never fallen so low in public estimation as in some parts of the State, and their schools have turned out some of the best specimens of common school men, hard-working, enterprising business men, which the State and the country, for they are found all over the country, can boast. Much of this can be, and must in justice, be attributed to the Bingham Library for Youth. This Library was established in 1803, and owes its origin to a generous donation of one hundred and fifty volumes to the town of Salisbury, by Caleb Bingham, then of Boston, but a native of Salisbury, and the author of several popular school books.

The following letter to his brother, which was copied from the records of the Library, accompanied the books, and explains the object and views of the donor.

Boston, Jan'y 4th, 1803.

Dear Brother,—If the people of Salisbury, from my present conduct, should tax me with acting a *childish* part, I feel willing to bear the imputation, for I can readily conceive of the justness of such a remark. Indeed, I have been so long conversant with children, that it is possible that my feelings towards them may be somewhat different from those of mankind in general.

We all agree that the education of youth is an object of the highest consequence; but all are apt to be too sparing of the means for the attainment of that object. Could the pursuit of useful knowledge be substituted for the common amusement of children, there is no doubt but there would be a greater number of valuable members of society in advanced age.

I well remember, when I was a boy, how ardently I longed for the opportunity of reading, but had no access to a library. It is more than probable that there are at the present time, in my native town, many children who possess the same desire, and who are in a like unhappy predicament. This desire, I think I have it in my power, in a small degree, to gratify. And however whimsical the project may appear to those who have not considered the subject, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of making the attempt. For that purpose, I have selected from my shelves 150 volumes for the commencement of a Library for the sole use of the children of the town of Salisbury, from nine to sixteen years of age, who are sufficiently capable of reading, and whose moral characters are such as to entitle them to the confidence of the Trustees of the Library.

To this small beginning, it is presumed the liberality of your fellow townsmen will induce them to make such additions from time to time, as that it will at length become respectable.

It is to be hoped that the following gentlemen will not consider it too burdensome to take upon themselves the management of the Library, to whose entire direction, I beg leave to submit it, with the right of filling any vacancies which may happen in their Board: viz. Rev. Joseph W. Crossman, Samuel Lee, Esq., Luther Holley, Asa Hutchison, Peter Farnam, Phineas Chapin, Timothy Chittenden, jr. Elisha Sterling, Lot Norton, jr. Binajah Bingham. After all, should it so happen that the books should be rejected, on the proposed considerations, or should there be any falling out, (which God forbid,) so that the object in view is like to be defeated, you are hereby authorized to take the books into your possession, and retain them till you further hear from  
your affectionate brother,

CALEB BINGHAM.

MR. D. BINGHAM.

The town gladly accepted this donation, and has from time to time appropriated sums of money, one hundred, fifty, twenty dollars, to enlarge and perpetuate the usefulness of Mr. Bingham's object. Indeed, we were told that the town always acquiesced, without a dissenting voice in the applications of the Trustees of this Library. Thus was established, so far as we are informed, the first Youth's Library on this or the other side of the Atlantic. It dates back far beyond the establishment of Sunday School Libraries, and is essentially different from the old social or union libraries, which once abounded more than now, in this State. But in all probability, this library owes its origin to the benefits which Mr. Bingham had derived from a town library in Salisbury, which owes its beginning to a very singular way of acknowledging an act of confiscation. At the breaking out of the war of the revolution, a man by the name of Smith, a native of England, was proprietor of a furnace and we believe of some of the ore beds in Salisbury. As he adhered to the side of the king and parliament, he was banished as a traitor, and his property was confiscated. In return, on the close of the war, he sent to the town of Salisbury a valuable collection of books, which became the foundation of a town library, that is still in existence, though in a much neglected condition. It was here that Mr. Bingham probably

gratified his early taste for reading, to which and the Common Schools, we believe he owed his success in life. He returned, a hundred, yea, a thousand fold, the good he had derived from the town library, by founding the youth's library. The books which he gave have been literally worn out, but their places have been from time to time supplied, and instead of one hundred and fifty volumes, the youth of Salisbury have access to near five hundred volumes. On the days when the books are drawn, there is usually a representative present from a majority of all the families in town, and a highly interesting sight is presented in the animated, eager, inquiring group.

Long may this Library remain, an enduring monument of well timed liberality—and though the books which were originally given have disappeared, still, the name of Bingham will not perish, but will live forever in the gratitude and usefulness of the hundreds and thousands of useful men and women who have through his instrumentality tasted the divine pleasures of knowledge, and are now engaged in honorable and useful stations in every part of our common country.

#### SCHOOL BOOKS RECOMMENDED IN WINDHAM

##### COUNTY.

The committee appointed at the annual meeting of the Windham County Association, consisted of the President, Judge Judson, George Sharpe, Geo. J. Tillotson, Uriel Fuller, Philip Pearl, C. F. Cleveland, Otis Rockwood, Charles Mathewson, Stowel L. Weld, John E. Tyler, Allen Harris, Henry Robinson. This committee resolved itself into sub-divisions, and each sub-division was instructed to examine into the best books, in one or more branches, now in use in the schools of the county, as well as others within their reach. The committee re-assembled at Brooklyn on the 29th of Oct., heard the reports of the sub-committees, discussed the comparative merits of each book recommended, ascertained, as far as possible, the extent to which the books to which a preference was accorded, were in use, with a view of saving unnecessary expense to parents, and came to the conclusion of recommending the following, viz.:

Mother's Primer, Webster's Spelling Book, Hall's Primary Reader and Manual, Parley's Small Geography, Smith's Arithmetic, Grammar, and Geography, and Goodrich's History of the United States.

#### CONNECTICUT STATE LYCEUM.

In accordance with a vote passed at the last annual meeting of the Connecticut State Lyceum, there will be a special meeting of said association at Middletown on Wednesday, the 13th of November, to commence at 10 o'clock A. M.

By a vote of the Lyceum, all other literary associations in the State, are invited to send delegates. The friends of popular education are respectfully invited to attend.

Addresses are expected from gentlemen from different parts of the State.

D. D. FIELD, V. President, } For Middle.

ALFRED SAXE, Cor. Sec. } sex County.

A. W. SMITH, } Members of Ex.

S. D. HUBBARD, } ecutive Com.

N. B. Papers friendly to the above object are respectfully requested to copy this notice.

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY LYCEUM.

In consequence of the meeting of the State Lyceum, which is to be held in this place on the 13th of next month, as above notified, it is proposed to adjourn the annual meeting of the County Lyceum to that time. This meeting of the County association would by adjournment from last year, come on Friday next—and it is supposed the executive committee cannot *beforehand* constitutionally change it—but if delegates from the Town Associations who may have been appointed will attend on the 14th of November instead of Friday next, the officers in this place will see that the meeting is adjourned to that time, when it is hoped every literary association in the county will be represented. By order of the Executive Committee,

JOHN JOHNSTON, Rec. Sec.

Middletown, Oct. 14.

TO TEACHERS.—A copy of the first volume of the Connecticut Common School Journal will be forwarded to such teachers as will secure ten subscribers to the present volume, on the terms proposed in the prospectus.

The publishers are obliged to postpone their list of subscribers, to the next number. In the mean time they would remind the friends of the Journal to forward their subscriptions immediately, and to remember the terms of the prospectus.